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MACAULAY
ESSAYS ON ADDISON AND MILTON

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ESSAYS ON
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T. B. MACAULAY.

MACAULAY'S ESSAYS

ON

ADDISON AND MILTON

EDITED WITH NOTES

BY

HERBERT AUGUSTINE SMITH, PH.D.

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PREFACE

In the preparation of this little volume the editor has had in mind the needs of two different classes of students, intending it both for school and for college use. In consequence, the notes are not quite what they would have been had they been made for either class alone. Some of them will seem to a college Freshman or Sophomore unnecessarily elementary; while the school teacher may find the allusions to contemporary history and literature unnecessarily full, and implying a knowledge somewhat beyond that of his pupils.

Nevertheless, the editor trusts that its usefulness has in neither case been impaired. It does not take much experience with a college class to discover the possibilities of ignorance there; it is unsafe to assume a general knowledge of anything not required by the entrance examination, and no seed of information can be too elementary to drop somewhere into virgin soil. On the other hand, every school contains a considerable percentage of boys who are, in general information and wider reading, far ahead of their fellows. It does no harm to provide for the needs of these boys; and the skillful teacher will find the utilization in the class-room of their knowledge an efficient aid to the instruction of their less intelligent companions.

The vital question in preparing a work of this kind is, of course, how to make the study both instructive and stimulating. Some of our friends are telling us that we are in

danger of making English, as taught in the schools, and perhaps in the colleges, lifeless and pedantic, and so of doing more harm than good. Such an essay as the one before us is, they say, first of all literary. No sane man sits down for the purely literary enjoyment of a literary work with a formidable armament of dictionaries, encyclopædias, literary histories, and other books of reference piled in front of him, ready at the first glimpse of a proper name which conveys a vague meaning, or none at all, to hunt the intruder down and dispatch him by committing to memory the dates of his birth and death. Why, then, should we require our boys and girls to read Macaulay with one finger in the notes? Such a method, we are told, is destructive of all literary enjoyment and literary taste, and fails equally of securing an intelligent comprehension of the substance of what is read, since the attention is distracted by the pursuit of irrelevant details. "They can't see the woods for the trees."

It may be said, in the first place, that an intelligent and well educated reader does use reference books in connection with his reading. If he is confronted with a word in his own language which gives him no meaning, he reaches for his dictionary; if he finds his geography deficient, he is pretty likely to get out his atlas. He does these things for two reasons. His mind is alert, and seeking all the time to grasp the essential meaning of what he reads; if he fails to grasp it, he feels himself baffled and puzzled, and knows he has lost a part of the enjoyment of the author. Further, he wishes to increase his general knowledge. The best informed persons are just those who are most eager to be better informed.

It is highly desirable that boys and girls should early learn the use of books of reference. The best part of an education is that which is gained after one has learned to

go alone; a well stored mind comes only from a lifetime of acquisition. School and college can do no more than get people ready to take entire charge of their own education; pupils should be trained to be acquisitive—capable of enlarging, and anxious to enlarge, their stores of information. The habit of using books of reference is certainly a very important one for the teacher to inculcate. But the *habit* cannot be developed by insisting that the pupil shall look up every unknown word, every proper name, every chance allusion. The boy who, reading that Addison's "knowledge of the Latin poets, from Lucretius and Catullus down to Claudian and Prudentius, was singularly exact and profound," goes for his classical dictionary and looks up Lucretius, Catullus, Claudian, and Prudentius, with the result, very likely, of announcing to his teacher the next day that they are "all Latin poets," has not got very far beyond his neighbor who took Macaulay's word for it. Nor would it have helped him, had his notes informed him that "Lucretius was a celebrated Latin writer, famous as the author of the *De Rerum Natura*, a philosophical didactic poem in six books." If the study of the text aims at teaching how to read, some other method must be followed.

The thing that the pupil wants is the author's meaning. To get this, his attention must be concentrated on what he reads. He certainly cannot read intelligently, if his first endeavor is to carry in his memory various unrelated facts recorded in the notes—a kind of bead exercise, with the text for string. But neither can he read intelligently what he does not understand. One great trouble is that he is very apt to be reading mechanically from the start, because he is preparing a lesson. Perhaps, too, he has never learned to read carefully, word by word, but only skims the surface; his reading has been children's books, light fiction, and the newspapers; the ideas which reach his brain are

faint and swiftly passing shadows. Therefore he must grapple with every sentence, and make it yield him a meaning — clear, definite, well grasped. To such a process every new name and uncomprehended allusion opposes an obstacle. His previous light reading has not called for concentrated effort; it is hard to keep his plough in this heavier soil, and at the slightest obstruction it leaps quite from the furrow, and scratches along on top. So the connection is broken and the attention dispersed. Granted that the intellectual exertion necessary to grasp the meaning word by word may consume all the mental energy available, leaving the reader powerless to carry the thought connection or to read with literary appreciation, it still remains true that a sentence which conveys no meaning can neither add to knowledge nor give pleasure. The child in his first reading lessons halts and stumbles, and finds all his energies absorbed in the effort to recognize and pronounce the words; but he will never learn to read except by repeating the process until the mind learns to do mechanically what now absorbs all the attention. So with the schoolboy. Plodding is hard, but it is only by plodding now that he will eventually be able to do something better worth while.

In annotating this essay for school use, the editor has sought to adapt the notes to three ends. They aim in the first place at helping the pupil to grasp the sense of the text. And as there is a great difference between reading and studying an essay, and as the discipline and increased power which study is intended to result in can be gained only by somewhat close application, the sense which the pupil should try to grasp is the sense of each sentence and each word. In this connection it should be said that no attempt has been made to provide a substitute for the dictionary, which should be resorted to whenever its use is necessary. The second object of the notes is to make the

study additionally profitable by imparting such general information connected with the substance of the essay as the preparatory-school student may reasonably be expected to be interested in, and to remember. Here again the line has been drawn in the case of many things which the editor, but not the teacher, should assume that "every schoolboy knows." And, finally, they seek also to interest the reader in literature by familiarizing him with the literary history of the time, and stimulating him, under the helpful direction of his teacher, to take up in the way of outside reading some of the writings of Addison and his contemporaries.

One thing the editor feels very strongly, and that is the importance of a knowledge of English history in any study connected with its literature, and the appalling ignorance of it which is often to be found even among fairly well educated people. The Essay on Addison is a historical essay, and, though its history is mainly literary history, it calls for an acquaintance with the important political events of the time. No teacher should fail to supply to his class, before beginning the essay, an outline of English history from 1685 to 1719, including the dates of accession of William and Mary, Anne, and George I., and to see that, with the aid of the notes, Macaulay's references are always clearly understood.

In college classes it is thought that this book may be serviceable in two ways. It may be used for auxiliary reading in connection with class-room study of Addison, or it may be used as the starting-point for a study of the literary history of the time. For this purpose the notes have been prepared with a good deal of care, and will, it is trusted, be found correct, — or as nearly so as conscientious labor can reasonably hope to make them. The editor would be indeed presumptuous to think of laying down methods for

teachers of advanced work; yet he may, perhaps, be permitted to suggest that a student who wishes to study closely Addison and his time may find it worth while to take to pieces, as it were, such an essay as Macaulay's, and hunt up the evidence on which each statement rests. A close comparison of the present essay with the corresponding ones of Thackeray and Johnson, and with Mr. Courthope's 'Life of Addison' in the English Men of Letters Series, followed by a tracing back of the various facts recorded in these to their origins, may serve to somewhat advanced students as an introduction to a thorough and intimate knowledge of the writers who flourished in the days of Queen Anne.

YALE UNIVERSITY,
January, 1898.

LIFE OF MACAULAY.

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY was born at the home of his father's brother-in-law, Thomas Babington, at Rothley, in Leicestershire, on Oct. 25, 1800. His early home was in the suburbs of London. His father, the son of a Scotch minister, had lived for some years in the British West Indies. Having learned from practical experience what slavery meant, he resigned the lucrative position which his abilities had won, and returned to England to join the little band of devoted philanthropists who were fighting to put an end to the slave-trade, and to abolish slavery in the English dependencies. Macaulay was his oldest child.

The boy gave early evidence of unusual powers. From the age of three years he was a voracious reader; before he was eight he began to amuse himself with such literary labors as the composition of epic and narrative poems, hymns, epitomes of history, arguments for Christianity. To a wonderfully exact and ready memory was joined intellectual restlessness and imaginative activity. His productions were of course worthless as literature, but they show the bent of the child's mind. He talked the language of books; the world in which he lived was quite apart from that of the ordinary schoolboy.

In the outdoor sports and games of schoolboys he was never proficient. "He could neither swim, nor row, nor drive, nor skate, nor shoot." To the end of his life he remained one of the clumsiest of men. His gloves never

fitted; his clothes were ill put on; he could not strop a razor, and when he shaved he usually cut himself. Even with this physical awkwardness he might in a large school have been drawn into the life around him. But his preparation for the university was at small private schools, so that he was never really a boy among boys. He was not unpopular, but he cared little for anything but reading; in this his activity was prodigious. He read with great rapidity, and yet accurately; and the power of his memory is almost incredible. He could repeat long poems word for word after a single reading; he knew *Paradise Lost* and *Pilgrim's Progress* by heart. On one occasion he recalled and recited two worthless newspaper poems which he had happened to read while waiting in a coffee-room forty years before, and had never thought of in the interval.

On his entrance upon university life, which was at Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1818, the social side of the greatest talker of his generation began to develop. Macaulay had never been a mere bookworm; even at school he had been distinguished for the vehemence and self-confidence of his conversation, and the pleasure he took in it; and contemporary politics had always had the keenest interest for him. At his father's house he had been accustomed to hear public affairs discussed by men of distinguished ability, who were themselves intimately concerned in them, and who were at the same time actuated only by high and unselfish motives, moral earnestness, and devotion to duty. In this school Macaulay had received his early training, and he never forgot its principles. Important questions were now pressing forward in English politics. Hostility to the excesses of the French Revolution and the struggle against Napoleon had given a lease of life to British conservatism which was now nearly run out. Roman Catholics were still disqualified from holding office; Parliament was unrepresentative and

under the control of the landowners — the aristocracy; grain was kept dear in the interests of a class, by unjust taxation. But the agitation for reforms had already begun. And in literature and religion as well a liberalizing spirit was at work. Everywhere new ideas were in conflict with old forms — the nineteenth century against the eighteenth. Surrounded as he was by a society of brilliant contemporaries, and in the ferment of the new life which was working in the universities, Macaulay, with his well-stored mind and his exhaustless intellectual energy, found here opportunity for the free play and full expansion of his powers. Macaulay was eminently a sociable man. He loved to talk almost as well as he loved to read. He could talk all day and all night. No hour which found him a listener was ever too late; and if his companion wished his share of the time, they both talked at once. It was not until many years later that he acquired the habit of intermittent "flashes of silence," which Sydney Smith noted as so delightful. His extraordinary fertility of mind and readiness of memory made him incomparable. He was never at a loss for an argument. Everything that he had ever read seemed at the end of his tongue; his mind could range in an instant through his vast storehouse of information, and bring to the front whatever bore on the question in hand. If he wished to illustrate the use of a word, he seemed to be able to quote offhand every passage containing that word which he had ever read, — it made no difference whether it was Latin, Greek, or English. It was no wonder that a man of such powers should have won for himself a foremost place as a conversationalist and an orator, as well as in literature.

His career at the university was signalized by the academic honors which he won. His scholarship, it is true, was not of the kind which loves to delve in details or range about abstractions. He disliked and neglected mathematics, and

he defined a scholar as one who reads Plato with his feet on the fender. But in 1821 he proved the quality of his classical attainments by carrying off a Craven scholarship, and twice he won the Chancellor's medal for English verse. Finally, in 1824, he was elected, after the usual competitive examination, one of the Fellows of his college.

His first distinguished literary success was in 1825, and it was obtained by the publication of the Essay on Milton. Already he had begun to appear in print, having contributed a number of articles and some verse to a newly started and short-lived London quarterly. But the *Edinburgh Review*, which printed the Essay on Milton, was the most important periodical in the country. The Essay was immediately recognized as the work of a new and brilliant writer, and Macaulay became a regular contributor to the *Review*. At the same time he was pursuing the study of the law, though with little interest and no expectation of making it seriously his profession. It is said that "he never really applied himself to any pursuit that was against the grain," and the law was not to his taste. But politics were; and in 1830 he entered the House of Commons as member for Calne.

For the next seventeen years literature held only a second place in his thoughts. His speeches on the Reform Bill in 1831 placed him at once in the front rank of parliamentary orators, and contributed largely to the success of the measure. Had he been free to follow the bent of his own inclinations, he might perhaps have risen to a position second to none of the great leaders of his party. But his poverty hampered him. His father's business, good when Macaulay entered the university, had gone from bad to worse, until at last there was nothing of it left but debts, which Macaulay most honorably assumed and at last completely paid. His writing could be depended on for a small income, but it drew upon his time. As long as his

party was in power he was sure of office and a salary, but he feared a crisis in which he could not support the Ministry. At this juncture a chance came to earn, by banishing himself from England for a few years, enough to yield him a comfortable income for the rest of his life. He was appointed a member of the Supreme Council of India, and early in 1834 he left England to enter upon his new duties as one of the five English rulers of a great empire.

The summer of 1838 saw him back in London. In his new-found leisure he began to plan his *History of England.* But his services were too valuable to his party to admit of his remaining in private life. Within a year he was elected to Parliament again as one of the members for Edinburgh, and soon after was taken into the Cabinet as Secretary of War. Macaulay was an ardent Whig, and always ready to do battle for his party. He was soon relieved from the cares of office, however, by the success of the Tories in 1841, and though he continued to sit as one of the representatives of Edinburgh, he was for the most part free to press forward the preparation of his greatest work. Five years later he again held office for a short time, but in the elections of 1847 he lost his seat in Parliament, and withdrew from public life. In 1852 he refused a place in the Cabinet; and though, in the same year, yielding to the wishes of his former constituents at Edinburgh, who were anxious to make amends for his earlier defeat and were proud of so distinguished a representative, he again entered Parliament, he never afterwards took a prominent part in the country's business. All his strength was given to the History.

In 1848 the first two volumes appeared. Its success was unprecedented. Macaulay had proposed to himself to write a work which should "supersede the last fashionable novel on the tables of young ladies." The History proved to be the most popular book of its generation, both in England

and America. In his own country three thousand copies went in ten days, — a record surpassing anything since Waverley, nearly forty years before; and four months later a New York publisher informed Macaulay that there were six editions on the market, with probably sixty thousand copies sold, adding, "No work, of any kind, has ever so completely taken our whole country by storm." The next two volumes, published in 1855, were still more popular. Within three months his publishers paid him £20,000 in a single check. With pecuniary reward came also the honors that belonged to the first English historian of his day. In 1849 he had declined the professorship of modern history at Cambridge. In 1853 he was elected a foreign member of the Institute of France, and the king of Prussia named him a knight of the Order of Merit. Learned societies all over Europe made him of their number; he held high offices at the universities of Glasgow and Cambridge; and in 1857 he was elevated to the peerage, as Baron Macaulay of Rothley.

Not content with making himself the most popular and influential essayist and historian of his time, Lord Macaulay had aspired also to the poet's laurels. In 1842 he had published his well-known *Lays of Ancient Rome.* Full of fire and spirit, of rapid movement, vigor, and stateliness, they are as characteristic of their author as are his speeches or his History. Macaulay was not a poet of the kind of the greatest poets of our century. His imagination was rather historic than poetic; one of the tenderest-hearted of men, his feeling was social and sympathetic rather than lyric and impassioned; his delight was in objective activity, not in the companionship of his own moods; he loved the life of men better than the life of nature; he was not an instinctive master of the secrets of the human heart. But he had the power of making the past seem present to him. He moved in other days or lands as easily as his own; London became

at will the London of Queen Anne or the capital of the Cæsars. He could reconstruct, from the material which his great reading supplied, all the life and color and movement of generations dead and gone. The *Lays of Ancient Rome* are not mere rhetoric in verse; they move us like martial music and the tread of marching men; they are genuine poetry, though not of the kind which our age values most.

Lord Macaulay's life had always been intense. "When I do sit down to work," he said of himself, "I work harder and faster than any person that I ever knew"; and he played as hard as he worked. His tremendous intellectual energy, always active, and always applying itself in powerfully concentrated effort, had begun to wear out his body. In 1852 had developed serious trouble with his heart, and he never regained perfect health. As the History progressed, he applied himself to his task with increasing difficulty; after the publication of the second instalment his waning strength compelled him to resign his seat in Parliament; the fifth volume he did not live to see in print. Toward the close of the year 1859 his weakness grew upon him, and on December 28th death came, suddenly but painlessly, as he sat in his easy chair with open book beside him. He was buried in Westminster Abbey, near to Johnson and Addison, — the great representative prose writer of the first half of the nineteenth century beside the two great essayists of the eighteenth.

The most conspicuous trait in Macaulay's character, the trait which appears in all that he did, is his vigor, his energy of intellect. He is a kind of nineteenth-century Dr. Johnson, made fit for the drawing-room. But where Johnson was lazy, he was active; where Johnson was melancholy, he was cheerful; where Johnson was weak, he was strong. His exhaustless capacity for work, his incessant intellectual

activity, — he read with impartial avidity everything from the hardest Greek tragedy to the last bad novel, — his wonderful powers of memory, his brilliant conversation, his diversified interests and varied literary production, all attest the same trait. He wasted on trifles the intellectual force of half a dozen ordinary brains.

It is not strange that such a man should have been one of the most forcible writers that ever held a pen. Every sentence is crisp, clear, and strong. The boy or girl who studies Macaulay's style is taking a composition tonic. It is the best remedy that can be prescribed for the diffuseness and inaccuracy of thought, loose and ineffective sentence-structure, and feeble use of words, that beset the average untrained writer. Clearness and force in thinking, speaking, and writing are the qualities best worth cultivating. "The first rule of all writing," said Macaulay, "that rule to which every other is subordinate, is that the words used by the writer shall be such as most fully and precisely convey his meaning to the great body of his readers." It is a rule which we may well make our motto. The teacher who makes the best use of Macaulay will not fail to direct continual attention to the style.

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF ADDISON.

(EDINBURGH REVIEW, JULY, 1843.)

SOME reviewers are of opinion that a lady who dares to publish a book renounces by that act the franchises appertaining to her sex, and can claim no exemption from the utmost rigor of critical procedure. From that opinion we dissent. We admit, indeed, that in a country which boasts of many female writers, eminently qualified by their talents and acquirements to influence the public mind, it would be of most pernicious consequence that inaccurate history or unsound philosophy should be suffered to pass uncensured, merely because the offender chanced to be a lady. But we conceive that, on such occasions, a critic would do well to imitate the courteous knight who found himself compelled by duty to keep the lists against Bradamante. He, we are told, defended successfully the cause of which he was the champion; but before the fight began, exchanged Balisarda for a less deadly sword, of which he carefully blunted the point and edge.

Nor are the immunities of sex the only immunities which Miss Aikin may rightfully plead. Several of her works, and especially the very pleasing 'Memoirs of the Reign of James the First,' have fully entitled her to the privileges enjoyed by good writers. One of those privileges we hold to be this, that such writers, when, either from the unlucky choice of a subject or from the indolence too often produced by success, they happen to fail,

shall not be subjected to the severe discipline which it is sometimes necessary to inflict upon dunces and impostors, but shall merely be reminded by a gentle touch, like that with which the Laputan flapper roused his dreaming lord, that it is high time to wake.

Our readers will probably infer from what we have said that Miss Aikin's book has disappointed us. The truth is, that she is not well acquainted with her subject. No person who is not familiar with the political and literary history of England during the reigns of William the Third, of Anne, and of George the First can possibly write a good life of Addison. Now, we mean no reproach to Miss Aikin, and many will think that we pay her a compliment, when we say that her studies have taken a different direction. She is better acquainted with Shakespeare and Raleigh than with Congreve and Prior; and is far more at home among the ruffs and peaked beards of Theobald's than among the Steenkirks and flowing periwigs which surrounded Queen Anne's tea-table at Hampton. She seems to have written about the Elizabethan age because she had read much about it; she seems, on the other hand, to have read a little about the age of Addison because she had determined to write about it. The consequence is, that she has had to describe men and things without having either a correct or a vivid idea of them, and that she has often fallen into errors of a very serious kind. The reputation which Miss Aikin has justly earned stands so high, and the charm of Addison's letters is so great, that a second edition of this work may probably be required. If so, we hope that every paragraph will be revised, and that every date and fact about which there can be the smallest doubt will be carefully verified.

To Addison himself we are bound by a sentiment as much like affection as any sentiment can be which is

inspired by one who has been sleeping a hundred and twenty years in Westminster Abbey. We trust, however, that this feeling will not betray us into that abject idolatry which we have often had occasion to reprehend in others, and which seldom fails to make both the idolater and the idol ridiculous. A man of genius and virtue is but a man. All his powers cannot be equally developed; nor can we expect from him perfect self-knowledge. We need not, therefore, hesitate to admit that Addison has left us some compositions which do not rise above mediocrity, some heroic poems hardly equal to Parnell's, some criticism as superficial as Dr. Blair's, and a tragedy not very much better than Dr. Johnson's. It is praise enough to say of a writer that, in a high department of literature, in which many eminent writers have distinguished themselves, he has had no equal; and this may with strict justice be said of Addison.

As a man, he may not have deserved the adoration which he received from those who, bewitched by his fascinating society, and indebted for all the comforts of life to his generous and delicate friendship, worshiped him nightly in his favorite temple at Button's. But after full inquiry and impartial reflection, we have long been convinced that he deserved as much love and esteem as can be justly claimed by any of our infirm and erring race. Some blemishes may undoubtedly be detected in his character; but the more carefully it is examined, the more will it appear, to use the phrase of the old anatomists, sound in the noble parts, free from all taint of perfidy, of cowardice, of cruelty, of ingratitude, of envy. Men may easily be named in whom some particular good disposition has been more conspicuous than in Addison. But the just harmony of qualities, the exact temper between the stern and the humane virtues, the habitual observance of every

law, not only of moral rectitude, but of moral grace and dignity, distinguish him from all men who have been tried by equally strong temptations, and about whose conduct we possess equally full information.

His father was the Reverend Lancelot Addison, who, though eclipsed by his more celebrated son, made some figure in the world, and occupies with credit two folio pages in the Biographia Britannica. Lancelot was sent up as a poor scholar from Westmoreland to Queen's College, Oxford, in the time of the Commonwealth; made some progress in learning; became, like most of his fellow-students, a violent Royalist; lampooned the heads of the university, and was forced to ask pardon on his bended knees. When he had left college he earned a humble subsistence by reading the liturgy of the fallen Church to the families of those sturdy squires whose manor-houses were scattered over the Wild of Sussex. After the Restoration his loyalty was rewarded with the post of chaplain to the garrison of Dunkirk. When Dunkirk was sold to France he lost his employment. But Tangier had been ceded by Portugal to England as part of the marriage portion of the Infanta Catharine; and to Tangier Lancelot Addison was sent. A more miserable situation can hardly be conceived. It was difficult to say whether the unfortunate settlers were more tormented by the heats or by the rains, by the soldiers within the wall or by the Moors without it. One advantage the chaplain had. He enjoyed an excellent opportunity of studying the history and manners of Jews and Mahometans; and of this opportunity he appears to have made excellent use. On his return to England, after some years of banishment, he published an interesting volume on the 'Polity and Religion of Barbary,' and another on the 'Hebrew Customs and the State of Rabbinical Learning.' He rose to eminence in his profes-

sion, and became one of the royal chaplains, a Doctor of Divinity, Archdeacon of Salisbury, and Dean of Lichfield. It is said that he would have been made a bishop after the Revolution if he had not given offense to the government by strenuously opposing, in the Convocation of 1689, the liberal policy of William and Tillotson.

In 1672, not long after Dr. Addison's return from Tangier, his son Joseph was born. Of Joseph's childhood we know little. He learned his rudiments at schools in his father's neighborhood, and was then sent to the Charterhouse. The anecdotes which are popularly related about his boyish tricks do not harmonize very well with what we know of his riper years. There remains a tradition that he was the ringleader in a barring out, and another tradition that he ran away from school and hid himself in a wood, where he fed on berries and slept in a hollow tree, till after a long search he was discovered and brought home. If these stories be true, it would be curious to know by what moral discipline so mutinous and enterprising a lad was transformed into the gentlest and most modest of men.

We have abundant proof that, whatever Joseph's pranks may have been, he pursued his studies vigorously and successfully. At fifteen he was not only fit for the university, but carried thither a classical taste and a stock of learning which would have done honor to a Master of Arts. He was entered at Queen's College, Oxford; but he had not been many months there when some of his Latin verses fell by accident into the hands of Dr. Lancaster, Dean of Magdalen College. The young scholar's diction and versification were already such as veteran professors might envy. Dr. Lancaster was desirous to serve a boy of such promise; nor was an opportunity long wanting. The Revolution had just taken place;

and nowhere had it been hailed with more delight than at Magdalen College. That great and opulent corporation had been treated by James and by his Chancellor with an insolence and injustice which, even in such a prince and in such a minister, may justly excite amazement, and which had done more than even the prosecution of the bishops to alienate the Church of England from the throne. A president, duly elected, had been violently expelled from his dwelling; a Papist had been set over the society by a royal mandate; the fellows, who, in conformity with their oaths, had refused to submit to this usurper, had been driven forth from their quiet cloisters and gardens to die of want or to live on charity. But the day of redress and retribution speedily came. The intruders were ejected; the venerable house was again inhabited by its old inmates; learning flourished under the rule of the wise and virtuous Hough; and with learning was united a mild and liberal spirit too often wanting in the princely colleges of Oxford. In consequence of the troubles through which the society had passed, there had been no valid election of new members during the year 1688. In 1689, therefore, there was twice the ordinary number of vacancies; and thus Dr. Lancaster found it easy to procure for his young friend admittance to the advantages of a foundation then generally esteemed the wealthiest in Europe.

At Magdalen Addison resided during ten years. He was at first one of those scholars who are called demies, but was subsequently elected a fellow. His college is still proud of his name; his portrait still hangs in the hall; and strangers are still told that his favorite walk was under the elms which fringe the meadow on the banks of the Cherwell. It is said, and is highly probable, that he was distinguished among his fellow-students

by the delicacy of his feelings, by the shyness of his manners, and by the assiduity with which he often prolonged his studies far into the night. It is certain that his reputation for ability and learning stood high. Many years later the ancient doctors of Magdalen continued to talk in their common room of his boyish compositions, and expressed their sorrow that no copy of exercises so remarkable had been preserved. It is proper, however, to remark that Miss Aikin has committed the error, very pardonable in a lady, of overrating Addison's classical attainments. In one department of learning, indeed, his proficiency was such as it is hardly possible to overrate. His knowledge of the Latin poets, from Lucretius and Catullus down to Claudian and Prudentius, was singularly exact and profound. He understood them thoroughly, entered into their spirit, and had the finest and most discriminating perception of all their peculiarities of style and melody; nay, he copied their manner with admirable skill, and surpassed, we think, all their British imitators who had preceded him, Buchanan and Milton alone excepted. This is high praise; and beyond this we cannot with justice go. It is clear that Addison's serious attention during his residence at the university was almost entirely concentrated on Latin poetry, and that, if he did not wholly neglect other provinces of ancient literature, he vouchsafed to them only a cursory glance. He does not appear to have attained more than an ordinary acquaintance with the political and moral writers of Rome; nor was his own Latin prose by any means equal to his Latin verse. His knowledge of Greek, though doubtless such as was in his time thought respectable at Oxford, was evidently less than that which many lads now carry away every year from Eton and Rugby. A minute examination of

his works, if we had time to make such an examination, would fully bear out these remarks. We will briefly advert to a few of the facts on which our judgment is grounded.

Great praise is due to the notes which Addison appended to his version of the second and third books of the 'Metamorphoses.' Yet those notes, while they show him to have been, in his own domain, an accomplished scholar, show also how confined that domain was. They are rich in apposite references to Virgil, Statius, and Claudian; but they contain not a single illustration drawn from the Greek poets. Now, if in the whole compass of Latin literature there be a passage which stands in need of illustration drawn from the Greek poets, it is the story of Pentheus in the third book of the 'Metamorphoses.' Ovid was indebted for that story to Euripides and Theocritus, both of whom he has sometimes followed minutely. But neither to Euripides nor to Theocritus does Addison make the faintest allusion; and we therefore believe that we do not wrong him by supposing that he had little or no knowledge of their works.

His travels in Italy, again, abound with classical quotations, happily introduced; but scarcely one of those quotations is in prose. He draws more illustrations from Ausonius and Manilius than from Cicero. Even his notions of the political and military affairs of the Romans seem to be derived from poets and poetasters. Spots made memorable by events which have changed the destinies of the world, and which have been worthily recorded by great historians, bring to his mind only scraps of some ancient versifier. In the gorge of the Apennines he naturally remembers the hardships which Hannibal's army endured, and proceeds to cite, not the

authentic narrative of Polybius, not the picturesque narrative of Livy, but the languid hexameters of Silius Italicus. On the banks of the Rubicon he never thinks of Plutarch's lively description, or of the stern conciseness of the Commentaries, or of those letters to Atticus which so forcibly express the alternations of hope and fear in a sensitive mind at a great crisis. His only authority for the events of the Civil War is Lucan.

All the best ancient works of art at Rome and Florence are Greek. Addison saw them, however, without recalling one single verse of Pindar, of Callimachus, or of the Attic dramatists; but they brought to his recollection innumerable passages of Horace, Juvenal, Statius, and Ovid.

The same may be said of the 'Treatise on Medals.' In that pleasing work we find about three hundred passages extracted with great judgment from the Roman poets; but we do not recollect a single passage taken from any Roman orator or historian, and we are confident that not a line is quoted from any Greek writer. No person who had derived all his information on the subject of medals from Addison would suspect that the Greek coins were in historical interest equal, and in beauty of execution far superior, to those of Rome.

If it were necessary to find any further proof that Addison's classical knowledge was confined within narrow limits, that proof would be furnished by his 'Essay on the Evidences of Christianity.' The Roman poets throw little or no light on the literary and historical questions which he is under the necessity of examining in that essay. He is, therefore, left completely in the dark; and it is melancholy to see how helplessly he gropes his way from blunder to blunder. He assigns as grounds for his religious belief stories as absurd as

that of the Cock Lane ghost, and forgeries as rank as Ireland's Vortigern; puts faith in the lie about the Thundering Legion; is convinced that Tiberius moved the Senate to admit Jesus among the gods; and pronounces the letter of Abgarus, King of Edessa, to be a record of great authority. Nor were these errors the effects of superstition; for to superstition Addison was by no means prone. The truth is, that he was writing about what he did not understand.

Miss Aikin has discovered a letter from which it appears that, while Addison resided at Oxford, he was one of several writers whom the booksellers engaged to make an English version of Herodotus; and she infers that he must have been a good Greek scholar. We can allow very little weight to this argument when we consider that his fellow-laborers were to have been Boyle and Blackmore. Boyle is remembered chiefly as the nominal author of the worst book on Greek history and philology that ever was printed; and this book, bad as it is, Boyle was unable to produce without help. Of Blackmore's attainments in the ancient tongues, it may be sufficient to say that, in his prose, he has confounded an aphorism with an apothegm, and that when, in his verse, he treats of classical subjects, his habit is to regale his readers with four false quantities to a page.

It is probable that the classical acquirements of Addison were of as much service to him as if they had been more extensive. The world generally gives its admiration, not to the man who does what nobody else even attempts to do, but to the man who does best what multitudes do well. Bentley was so immeasurably superior to all the other scholars of his time that few among them could discover his superiority. But the accomplishment in which Addison excelled his contemporaries was then.

as it is now, highly valued and assiduously cultivated at all English seats of learning. Everybody who had been at a public school had written Latin verses; many had written such verses with tolerable success, and were quite able to appreciate, though by no means able to rival, the skill with which Addison imitated Virgil. His lines on the 'Barometer' and the 'Bowling Green' were applauded by hundreds to whom the 'Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris' was as unintelligible as the hieroglyphics on an obelisk.

Purity of style and an easy flow of numbers are common to all Addison's Latin poems. Our favorite piece is the 'Battle of the Cranes and Pygmies,' for in that piece we discern a gleam of the fancy and humor which many years later enlivened thousands of breakfast-tables. Swift boasted that he was never known to steal a hint; and he certainly owed as little to his predecessors as any modern writer. Yet we cannot help suspecting that he borrowed, perhaps unconsciously, one of the happiest touches in his voyage to Lilliput from Addison's verses. Let our readers judge.

"The Emperor," says Gulliver, "is taller by about the breadth of my nail than any of his court, which alone is enough to strike an awe into the beholders."

About thirty years before 'Gulliver's Travels' appeared, Addison wrote these lines: —

> "Jamque acies inter medias sese arduus infert
> Pygmeadum ductor, qui, majestate verendus,
> Incessuque gravis, reliquos supereminet omnes
> Mole gigantea, mediamque exsurgit in ulnam."

The Latin poems of Addison were greatly and justly admired both at Oxford and Cambridge before his name had ever been heard by the wits who thronged the coffee-

houses round Drury Lane Theatre. In his twenty-second year he ventured to appear before the public as a writer of English verse. He addressed some complimentary lines to Dryden, who, after many triumphs and many reverses, had at length reached a secure and lonely eminence among the literary men of that age. Dryden appears to have been much gratified by the young scholar's praise; and an interchange of civilities and good offices followed. Addison was probably introduced by Dryden to Congreve, and was certainly presented by Congreve to Charles Montagu, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the Whig party in the House of Commons.

At this time Addison seemed inclined to devote himself to poetry. He published a translation of part of the fourth Georgic, 'Lines to King William,' and other performances of equal value; that is to say, of no value at all. But in those days the public was in the habit of receiving with applause pieces which would now have little chance of obtaining the Newdigate prize or the Seatonian prize. And the reason is obvious. The heroic couplet was then the favorite measure. The art of arranging words in that measure, so that the lines may flow smoothly, that the accents may fall correctly, that the rimes may strike the ear strongly, and that there may be a pause at the end of every distich, is an art as mechanical as that of mending a kettle or shoeing a horse, and may be learned by any human being who has sense enough to learn anything. But, like other mechanical arts, it was gradually improved by means of many experiments and many failures. It was reserved for Pope to discover the trick, to make himself complete master of it, and to teach it to everybody else. From the time when his 'Pastorals' appeared, heroic versification became

matter of rule and compass; and before long all artists were on a level. Hundreds of dunces who never blundered on one happy thought or expression were able to write reams of couplets which, as far as euphony was concerned, could not be distinguished from those of Pope himself, and which very clever writers of the reign of Charles the Second — Rochester, for example, or Marvel, or Oldham — would have contemplated with admiring despair.

Ben Jonson was a great man, Hoole a very small man. But Hoole, coming after Pope, had learned how to manufacture decasyllable verses, and poured them forth by thousands and tens of thousands, all as well turned, as smooth, and as like each other as the blocks which have passed through Mr. Brunel's mill in the dockyards at Portsmouth. Ben's heroic couplets resemble blocks rudely hewn out by an unpractised hand with a blunt hatchet. Take as a specimen his translation of a celebrated passage in the Æneid: —

> "This child our parent earth, stirred up with spite
> Of all the gods, brought forth, and, as some write,
> She was last sister of that giant race
> That sought to scale Jove's court, right swift of pace,
> And swifter far of wing, a monster vast
> And dreadful. Look, how many plumes are placed
> On her huge corpse, so many waking eyes
> Stick underneath, and, which may stranger rise
> In the report, as many tongues she wears."

Compare with these jagged, misshapen distichs the neat fabric which Hoole's machine produces in unlimited abundance. We take the first lines on which we open in his version of Tasso. They are neither better nor worse than the rest: —

"O thou, whoe'er thou art, whose steps are led,
By choice or fate, these lonely shores to tread,
No greater wonders east or west can boast
Than yon small island on the pleasing coast.
If e'er thy sight would blissful scenes explore,
The current pass, and seek the further shore."

Ever since the time of Pope there has been a glut of lines of this sort; and we are now as little disposed to admire a man for being able to write them as for being able to write his name. But in the days of William the Third such versification was rare; and a rimer who had any skill in it passed for a great poet, just as in the dark ages a person who could write his name passed for a great clerk. Accordingly, Duke, Stepney, Granville, Walsh, and others, whose only title to fame was that they said in tolerable meter what might have been as well said in prose, or what was not worth saying at all, were honored with marks of distinction which ought to be reserved for genius. With these Addison must have ranked, if he had not earned true and lasting glory by performances which very little resembled his juvenile poems.

Dryden was now busied with Virgil, and obtained from Addison a critical preface to the Georgics. In return for this service, and for other services of the same kind, the veteran poet, in the postscript to the translation of the Æneid, complimented his young friend with great liberality, and indeed with more liberality than sincerity. He affected to be afraid that his own performance would not sustain a comparison with the version of the fourth Georgic by "the most ingenious Mr. Addison of Oxford." "After his bees," added Dryden, "my latter swarm is scarcely worth the hiving."

The time had now arrived when it was necessary for Addison to choose a calling. Everything seemed to

point his course towards the clerical profession. His habits were regular, his opinions orthodox. His college had large ecclesiastical preferment in its gift, and boasts that it has given at least one bishop to almost every see in England. Dr. Lancelot Addison held an honorable place in the Church, and had set his heart on seeing his son a clergyman. It is clear, from some expressions in the young man's rimes, that his intention was to take orders. But Charles Montagu interfered. Montagu had first brought himself into notice by verses, well-timed and not contemptibly written, but never, we think, rising above mediocrity. Fortunately for himself and for his country, he early quitted poetry, in which he could never have attained a rank as high as that of Dorset or Rochester, and turned his mind to official and parliamentary business. It is written that the ingenious person who undertook to instruct Rasselas, prince of Abyssinia, in the art of flying, ascended an eminence, waved his wings, sprang into the air, and instantly dropped into the lake. But it is added that the wings which were unable to support him through the sky, bore him up effectually as soon as he was in the water. This is no bad type of the fate of Charles Montagu, and of men like him. When he attempted to soar into the regions of poetical invention, he altogether failed; but as soon as he had descended from that ethereal elevation into a lower and grosser element, his talents instantly raised him above the mass. He became a distinguished financier, debater, courtier, and party leader. He still retained his fondness for the pursuits of his early days; but he showed that fondness, not by wearying the public with his own feeble performances, but by discovering and encouraging literary excellence in others. A crowd of wits and poets, who would easily have vanquished

him as a competitor, revered him as a judge and a patron. In his plans for the encouragement of learning, he was cordially supported by the ablest and most virtuous of his colleagues, the Lord Chancellor Somers. Though both these great statesmen had a sincere love of letters, it was not solely from a love of letters that they were desirous to enlist youths of high intellectual qualifications in the public service. The Revolution had altered the whole system of government. Before that event the press had been controlled by censors, and the parliament had sat only two months in eight years. Now the press was free, and had begun to exercise unprecedented influence on the public mind. Parliament met annually and sat long. The chief power in the State had passed to the House of Commons. At such a conjuncture, it was natural that literary and oratorical talents should rise in value. There was danger that a government which neglected such talents might be subverted by them. It was, therefore, a profound and enlightened policy which led Montagu and Somers to attach such talents to the Whig party, by the strongest ties both of interest and of gratitude.

It is remarkable that in a neighboring country we have recently seen similar effects follow from similar causes. The Revolution of July, 1830, established representative government in France. The men of letters instantly rose to the highest importance in the State. At the present moment, most of the persons whom we see at the head both of the Administration and of the Opposition have been professors, historians, journalists, poets. The influence of the literary class in England during the generation which followed the Revolution was great, but by no means so great as it has lately been in France; for in England the aristocracy of intellect had to contend with a powerful and deeply rooted aris-

tocracy of a very different kind. France had no Somersets and Shrewsburies to keep down her Addisons and Priors.

It was in the year 1699, when Addison had just completed his twenty-seventh year, that the course of his life was finally determined. Both the great chiefs of the Ministry were kindly disposed towards him. In political opinions he already was what he continued to be through life, a firm, though a moderate, Whig. He had addressed the most polished and vigorous of his early English lines to Somers, and had dedicated to Montagu a Latin poem, truly Virgilian both in style and rhythm, on the peace of Ryswick. The wish of the young poet's great friends was, it should seem, to employ him in the service of the Crown abroad. But an intimate knowledge of the French language was a qualification indispensable to a diplomatist; and this qualification Addison had not acquired. It was, therefore, thought desirable that he should pass some time on the Continent in preparing himself for official employment. His own means were not such as would enable him to travel; but a pension of three hundred pounds a year was procured for him by the interest of the Lord Chancellor. It seems to have been apprehended that some difficulty might be started by the rulers of Magdalen College. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer wrote in the strongest terms to Hough. The State — such was the purport of Montagu's letter — could not, at that time, spare to the Church such a man as Addison. Too many high civil posts were already occupied by adventurers, who, destitute of every liberal art and sentiment, at once pillaged and disgraced the country which they pretended to serve. It had become necessary to recruit for the public service from a very different class, — from that class of which Addison was the

representative. The close of the Minister's letter was remarkable. "I am called," he said, "an enemy of the Church. But I will never do it any other injury than keeping Mr. Addison out of it."

This interference was successful; and in the summer of 1699, Addison, made a rich man by his pension, and still retaining his fellowship, quitted his beloved Oxford, and set out on his travels. He crossed from Dover to Calais, proceeded to Paris, and was received there with great kindness and politeness by a kinsman of his friend Montagu, Charles, Earl of Manchester, who had just been appointed Ambassador to the Court of France. The Countess, a Whig and a toast, was probably as gracious as her lord; for Addison long retained an agreeable recollection of the impression which she at this time made on him, and, in some lively lines written on the glasses of the Kit Cat Club, described the envy which her cheeks, glowing with the genuine bloom of England, had excited among the painted beauties of Versailles.

Louis the Fourteenth was at this time expiating the vices of his youth by a devotion which had no root in reason, and bore no fruit of charity. The servile literature of France had changed its character to suit the changed character of the prince. No book appeared that had not an air of sanctity. Racine, who was just dead, had passed the close of his life in writing sacred dramas; and Dacier was seeking for the Athanasian mysteries in Plato. Addison described this state of things in a short but lively and graceful letter to Montagu. Another letter, written about the same time to the Lord Chancellor, conveyed the strongest assurances of gratitude and attachment. "The only return I can make to your lordship," said Addison, "will be to apply

myself entirely to my business." With this view he quitted Paris and repaired to Blois, a place where it was supposed that the French language was spoken in its highest purity, and where not a single Englishman could be found. Here he passed some months pleasantly and profitably. Of his way of life at Blois, one of his associates, an abbé named Philippeaux, gave an account to Joseph Spence. If this account is to be trusted, Addison studied much, mused much, talked little, had fits of absence, and either had no love affairs or was too discreet to confide them to the abbé. A man who, even when surrounded by fellow-countrymen and fellow-students, had always been remarkably shy and silent, was not likely to be loquacious in a foreign tongue and among foreign companions. But it is clear from Addison's letters, some of which were long after published in the *Guardian*, that, while he appeared to be absorbed in his own meditations, he was really observing French society with that keen and sly, yet not ill-natured, side-glance which was peculiarly his own.

From Blois he returned to Paris; and having now mastered the French language, found great pleasure in the society of French philosophers and poets. He gave an account in a letter to Bishop Hough of two highly interesting conversations, one with Malebranche, the other with Boileau. Malebranche expressed great partiality for the English, and extolled the genius of Newton, but shook his head when Hobbes was mentioned, and was indeed so unjust as to call the author of the 'Leviathan' a poor silly creature. Addison's modesty restrained him from fully relating, in his letter, the circumstances of his introduction to Boileau. Boileau, having survived the friends and rivals of his youth, old, deaf, and melancholy, lived in retirement, seldom went either to Court or to the

Academy, and was almost inaccessible to strangers. Of the English and of English literature he knew nothing. He had hardly heard the name of Dryden. Some of our countrymen, in the warmth of their patriotism, have asserted that this ignorance must have been affected. We own that we see no ground for such a supposition. English literature was to the French of the age of Louis the Fourteenth what German literature was to our own grandfathers. Very few, we suspect, of the accomplished men who, sixty or seventy years ago, used to dine in Leicester Square with Sir Joshua, or at Streatham with Mrs. Thrale, had the slightest notion that Wieland was one of the first wits and poets, and Lessing beyond all dispute the first critic, in Europe. Boileau knew just as little about the 'Paradise Lost' and about 'Absalom and Achitophel'; but he had read Addison's Latin poems, and admired them greatly. They had given him, he said, quite a new notion of the state of learning and taste among the English. Johnson will have it that these praises were insincere. "Nothing," says he, "is better known of Boileau than that he had an injudicious and peevish contempt of modern Latin; and therefore his profession of regard was probably the effect of his civility rather than approbation." Now, nothing is better known of Boileau than that he was singularly sparing of compliments. We do not remember that either friendship or fear ever induced him to bestow praise on any composition which he did not approve. On literary questions, his caustic, disdainful, and self-confident spirit rebelled against that authority to which everything else in France bowed down. He had the spirit to tell Louis the Fourteenth firmly, and even rudely, that his Majesty knew nothing about poetry, and admired verses which were detestable. What was there in Addison's position that could induce the satirist, whose stern and

fastidious temper had been the dread of two generations, to turn sycophant for the first and last time? Nor was Boileau's contempt of modern Latin either injudicious or peevish. He thought, indeed, that no poem of the first order would ever be written in a dead language. And did he think amiss? Has not the experience of centuries confirmed his opinion? Boileau also thought it probable that, in the best modern Latin, a writer of the Augustan age would have detected ludicrous improprieties. And who can think otherwise? What modern scholar can honestly declare that he sees the smallest impurity in the style of Livy? Yet is it not certain that, in the style of Livy, Pollio, whose taste had been formed on the banks of the Tiber, detected the inelegant idiom of the Po? Has any modern scholar understood Latin better than Frederic the Great understood French? Yet is it not notorious that Frederic the Great, after reading, speaking, writing French, and nothing but French, during more than half a century, after unlearning his mother tongue in order to learn French, after living familiarly during many years with French associates, could not, to the last, compose in French without imminent risk of committing some mistake which would have moved a smile in the literary circles of Paris? Do we believe that Erasmus and Fracastorius wrote Latin as well as Dr. Robertson and Sir Walter Scott wrote English? And are there not in the 'Dissertation on India,' the last of Dr. Robertson's works, in 'Waverley,' in 'Marmion,' Scotticisms at which a London apprentice would laugh? But does it follow, because we think thus, that we can find nothing to admire in the noble alcaics of Gray, or in the playful elegiacs of Vincent Bourne? Surely not. Nor was Boileau so ignorant or tasteless as to be incapable of appreciating good modern Latin. In the very letter to

which Johnson alludes, Boileau says: "Ne croyez pas pourtant que je veuille par là blâmer les vers Latins que vous m'avez envoyés d'un de vos illustres académiciens. Je les ai trouvés fort beaux, et dignes de Vida et de Sannazar, mais non pas d'Horace et de Virgile." Several poems in modern Latin have been praised by Boileau quite as liberally as it was his habit to praise anything. He says, for example, of the Père Fraguier's epigrams, that Catullus seems to have come to life again. But the best proof that Boileau did not feel the undiscerning contempt for modern Latin verses which has been imputed to him is that he wrote and published Latin verses in several meters. Indeed, it happens, curiously enough, that the most severe censure ever pronounced by him on modern Latin is conveyed in Latin hexameters. We allude to the fragment which begins: —

> "Quid numeris iterum me balbutire Latinis,
> Longe Alpes citra natum de patre Sicambro,
> Musa, jubes?"

For these reasons we feel assured that the praise which Boileau bestowed on the 'Machinae Gesticulantes' and the 'Gerano-Pygmaeomachia' was sincere. He certainly opened himself to Addison with a freedom which was a sure indication of esteem. Literature was the chief subject of conversation. The old man talked on his favorite theme much and well, — indeed, as his young hearer thought, incomparably well. Boileau had undoubtedly some of the qualities of a great critic. He wanted imagination; but he had strong sense. His literary code was formed on narrow principles; but in applying it he showed great judgment and penetration. In mere style, abstracted from the ideas of which style is the garb, his taste was excellent. He was well acquainted with the great Greek

writers, and, though unable fully to appreciate their creative genius, admired the majestic simplicity of their manner, and had learned from them to despise bombast and tinsel. It is easy, we think, to discover in the *Spectator* and the *Guardian* traces of the influence, in part salutary and in part pernicious, which the mind of Boileau had on the mind of Addison.

While Addison was at Paris, an event took place which made that capital a disagreeable residence for an Englishman and a Whig. Charles, second of the name, King of Spain, died, and bequeathed his dominions to Philip, Duke of Anjou, a younger son of the Dauphin. The King of France, in direct violation of his engagements, both with Great Britain and with the States-General, accepted the bequest on behalf of his grandson. The House of Bourbon was at the summit of human grandeur. England had been outwitted, and found herself in a situation at once degrading and perilous. The people of France, not presaging the calamities by which they were destined to expiate the perfidy of their sovereign, went mad with pride and delight. Every man looked as if a great estate had just been left him. "The French conversation," said Addison, "begins to grow insupportable; that which was before the vainest nation in the world is now worse than ever." Sick of the arrogant exultation of the Parisians, and probably foreseeing that the peace between France and England could not be of long duration, he set off for Italy.

In December, 1700,[1] he embarked at Marseilles. As he

[1] It is strange that Addison should, in the first lines of his travels, have misdated his departure from Marseilles by a whole year, and still more strange that this slip of the pen, which throws the whole narrative into inextricable confusion, should have been repeated in a succession of editions, and never detected by Tickell or Hurd. — *Macaulay.*

glided along the Ligurian coast, he was delighted by the sight of myrtles and olive trees, which retained their verdure under the winter solstice. Soon, however, he encountered one of the black storms of the Mediterranean. The captain of the ship gave up all for lost, and confessed himself to a capuchin who happened to be on board. The English heretic, in the meantime, fortified himself against the terrors of death with devotions of a very different kind. How strong an impression this perilous voyage made on him appears from the ode, 'How are thy servants blest, O Lord!' which was long after published in the *Spectator*. After some days of discomfort and danger, Addison was glad to land at Savona, and to make his way, over mountains where no road had yet been hewn out by art, to the city of Genoa.

At Genoa, still ruled by her own Doge, and by the nobles whose names were inscribed on her Book of Gold, Addison made a short stay. He admired the narrow streets overhung by long lines of towering palaces, the walls rich with frescos, the gorgeous temple of the Annunciation, and the tapestries whereon were recorded the long glories of the House of Doria. Thence he hastened to Milan, where he contemplated the Gothic magnificence of the cathedral with more wonder than pleasure. He passed Lake Benacus while a gale was blowing, and saw the waves raging as they raged when Virgil looked upon them. At Venice, then the gayest spot in Europe, the traveler spent the Carnival, the gayest season of the year, in the midst of masks, dances, and serenades. Here he was at once diverted and provoked by the absurd dramatic pieces which then disgraced the Italian stage. To one of those pieces, however, he was indebted for a valuable hint. He was present when a ridiculous play on the death of Cato was performed.

Cato, it seems, was in love with a daughter of Scipio. The lady had given her heart to Cæsar. The rejected lover determined to destroy himself. He appeared seated in his library, a dagger in his hand, a Plutarch and a Tasso before him; and in this position he pronounced a soliloquy before he struck the blow. We are surprised that so remarkable a circumstance as this should have escaped the notice of all Addison's biographers. There cannot, we conceive, be the smallest doubt that this scene, in spite of its absurdities and anachronisms, struck the traveler's imagination, and suggested to him the thought of bringing Cato on the English stage. It is well known that about this time he began his tragedy, and that he finished the first four acts before he returned to England.

On his way from Venice to Rome, he was drawn some miles out of the beaten road by a wish to see the smallest independent state in Europe. On a rock where the snow still lay, though the Italian spring was now far advanced, was perched the little fortress of San Marino. The roads which led to the secluded town were so bad that few travelers had ever visited it, and none had ever published an account of it. Addison could not suppress a good-natured smile at the simple manners and institutions of this singular community. But he observed, with the exultation of a Whig, that the rude mountain tract which formed the territory of the republic swarmed with an honest, healthy, and contented peasantry, while the rich plain which surrounded the metropolis of civil and spiritual tyranny was scarcely less desolate than the uncleared wilds of America.

At Rome Addison remained on his first visit only long enough to catch a glimpse of St. Peter's and of the Pantheon. His haste is the more extraordinary because the Holy Week was close at hand. He has given no

hint which can enable us to pronounce why he chose to fly from a spectacle which every year allures from distant regions persons of far less taste and sensibility than his. Possibly, traveling as he did at the charge of a government distinguished by its enmity to the Church of Rome, he may have thought that it would be imprudent in him to assist at the most magnificent rite of that Church. Many eyes would be upon him, and he might find it difficult to behave in such a manner as to give offense neither to his patrons in England nor to those among whom he resided. Whatever his motives may have been, he turned his back on the most august and affecting ceremony which is known among men, and posted along the Appian Way to Naples.

Naples was then destitute of what are now, perhaps, its chief attractions. The lovely bay and the awful mountain were indeed there. But a farmhouse stood on the theater of Herculaneum, and rows of vines grew over the streets of Pompeii. The temples of Pæstum had not indeed been hidden from the eye of man by any great convulsion of nature; but, strange to say, their existence was a secret even to artists and antiquaries. Though situated within a few hours' journey of a great capital, where Salvator had not long before painted, and where Vico was then lecturing, those noble remains were as little known to Europe as the ruined cities overgrown by the forests of Yucatan. What was to be seen at Naples Addison saw. He climbed Vesuvius, explored the tunnel of Posilipo, and wandered among the vines and almond trees of Capreæ. But neither the wonders of nature nor those of art could so occupy his attention as to prevent him from noticing, though cursorily, the abuses of the government and the misery of the people. The great kingdom which had just descended to Philip the Fifth

was in a state of paralytic dotage. Even Castile and Aragon were sunk in wretchedness. Yet, compared with the Italian dependencies of the Spanish crown, Castile and Aragon might be called prosperous. It is clear that all the observations which Addison made in Italy tended to confirm him in the political opinions which he had adopted at home. To the last, he always spoke of foreign travel as the best cure for Jacobitism. In his *Freeholder*, the Tory foxhunter asks what traveling is good for except to teach a man to jabber French and to talk against passive obedience.

From Naples Addison returned to Rome by sea, along the coast which his favorite Virgil had celebrated. The felucca passed the headland where the oar and trumpet were placed by the Trojan adventurers on the tomb of Misenus, and anchored at night under the shelter of the fabled promontory of Circe. The voyage ended in the Tiber, still overhung with dark verdure, and still turbid with yellow sand, as when it met the eyes of Æneas. From the ruined port of Ostia the stranger hurried to Rome; and at Rome he remained during those hot and sickly months when, even in the Augustan age, all who could make their escape fled from mad dogs and from streets black with funerals, to gather the first figs of the season in the country. It is probable that when he, long after, poured forth in verse his gratitude to the Providence which had enabled him to breathe unhurt in tainted air, he was thinking of the August and September which he passed at Rome.

It was not till the latter end of October that he tore himself away from the masterpieces of ancient and modern art which are collected in the city so long the mistress of the world. He then journeyed northward, passed through Sienna, and for a moment forgot his

prejudices in favor of classic architecture as he looked on the magnificent cathedral. At Florence he spent some days with the Duke of Shrewsbury, who, cloyed with the pleasures of ambition and impatient of its pains, fearing both parties and loving neither, had determined to hide in an Italian retreat talents and accomplishments which, if they had been united with fixed principles and civil courage, might have made him the foremost man of his age. These days, we are told, passed pleasantly; and we can easily believe it. For Addison was a delightful companion when he was at his ease; and the Duke, though he seldom forgot that he was a Talbot, had the invaluable art of putting at ease all who came near him.

Addison gave some time to Florence, and especially to the sculptures in the Museum, which he preferred even to those of the Vatican. He then pursued his journey through a country in which the ravages of the last war were still discernible, and in which all men were looking forward with dread to a still fiercer conflict. Eugene had already descended from the Rhætian Alps to dispute with Catinat the rich plain of Lombardy. The faithless ruler of Savoy was still reckoned among the allies of Louis. England had not yet actually declared war against France; but Manchester had left Paris, and the negotiations which produced the Grand Alliance against the House of Bourbon were in progress. Under such circumstances, it was desirable for an English traveler to reach neutral ground without delay. Addison resolved to cross Mont Cenis. It was December, and the road was very different from that which now reminds the stranger of the power and genius of Napoleon. The winter, however, was mild; and the passage was, for those times, easy. To this journey Addison alluded when, in the ode which we have already quoted, he said that for

him the Divine goodness had warmed the hoary Alpine hills.

It was in the midst of the eternal snow that he composed his Epistle to his friend Montagu, now Lord Halifax. That Epistle, once widely renowned, is now known only to curious readers, and will hardly be considered by those to whom it is known as in any perceptible degree heightening Addison's fame. It is, however, decidedly superior to any English composition which he had previously published. Nay, we think it quite as good as any poem in heroic meter which appeared during the interval between the death of Dryden and the publication of the 'Essay on Criticism.' It contains passages as good as the second-rate passages of Pope, and would have added to the reputation of Parnell or Prior.

But whatever be the literary merits or defects of the Epistle, it undoubtedly does honor to the principles and spirit of the author. Halifax had now nothing to give. He had fallen from power, had been held up to obloquy, had been impeached by the House of Commons, and, though his peers had dismissed the impeachment, had, as it seemed, little chance of ever again filling high office. The Epistle, written at such a time, is one among many proofs that there was no mixture of cowardice or meanness in the suavity and moderation which distinguished Addison from all the other public men of those stormy times.

At Geneva the traveler learned that a partial change of ministry had taken place in England, and that the Earl of Manchester had become Secretary of State. Manchester exerted himself to serve his young friend. It was thought advisable that an English agent should be near the person of Eugene in Italy; and Addison, whose diplomatic education was now finished, was the

man selected. He was preparing to enter on his honorable functions, when all his prospects were for a time darkened by the death of William the Third.

Anne had long felt a strong aversion, personal, political, and religious, to the Whig party. That aversion appeared in the first measures of her reign. Manchester was deprived of the seals, after he had held them only a few weeks. Neither Somers nor Halifax was sworn of the Privy Council. Addison shared the fate of his three patrons. His hopes of employment in the public service were at an end; his pension was stopped, and it was necessary for him to support himself by his own exertions. He became tutor to a young English traveler, and appears to have rambled with his pupil over a great part of Switzerland and Germany. At this time he wrote his pleasing treatise on 'Medals.' It was not published till after his death; but several distinguished scholars saw the manuscript, and gave just praise to the grace of the style, and to the learning and ingenuity evinced by the quotations.

From Germany Addison repaired to Holland, where he learned the melancholy news of his father's death. After passing some months in the United Provinces, he returned, about the close of the year 1703, to England. He was there cordially received by his friends, and introduced by them into the Kit-Cat Club, a society in which were collected all the various talents and accomplishments which then gave luster to the Whig party.

Addison was, during some months after his return from the Continent, hard pressed by pecuniary difficulties. But it was soon in the power of his noble patrons to serve him effectually. A political change, silent and gradual, but of the highest importance, was in daily progress. The accession of Anne had been hailed by

the Tories with transports of joy and hope; and for a time it seemed that the Whigs had fallen never to rise again. The throne was surrounded by men supposed to be attached to the prerogative and to the Church; and among these none stood so high in the favor of the sovereign as the Lord Treasurer Godolphin and the Captain-General Marlborough.

The country gentlemen and country clergymen had fully expected that the policy of these ministers would be directly opposed to that which had been almost constantly followed by William; that the landed interest would be favored at the expense of trade; that no addition would be made to the funded debt; that the privileges conceded to Dissenters by the late king would be curtailed, if not withdrawn; that the war with France, if there must be such a war, would, on our part, be almost entirely naval; and that the government would avoid close connections with foreign powers, and, above all, with Holland.

But the country gentlemen and country clergymen were fated to be deceived, not for the last time. The prejudices and passions which raged without control in vicarages, in cathedral closes, and in the manor-houses of fox-hunting squires, were not shared by the chiefs of the ministry. Those statesmen saw that it was both for the public interest and for their own interest to adopt a Whig policy, at least as respected the alliances of the country and the conduct of the war. But if the foreign policy of the Whigs were adopted, it was impossible to abstain from adopting also their financial policy. The natural consequences followed. The rigid Tories were alienated from the government. The votes of the Whigs became necessary to it. The votes of the Whigs could be secured only by further concessions; and further concessions the Queen was induced to make.

At the beginning of the year 1704, the state of parties bore a close analogy to the state of parties in 1826. In 1826, as in 1704, there was a Tory ministry divided into two hostile sections. The position of Mr. Canning and his friends in 1826 corresponded to that which Marlborough and Godolphin occupied in 1704. Nottingham and Jersey were in 1704 what Lord Eldon and Lord Westmoreland were in 1826. The Whigs of 1704 were in a situation resembling that in which the Whigs of 1826 stood. In 1704, Somers, Halifax, Sunderland, Cowper, were not in office. There was no avowed coalition between them and the moderate Tories. It is probable that no direct communication tending to such a coalition had yet taken place; yet all men saw that such a coalition was inevitable, — nay, that it was already half formed. Such, or nearly such, was the state of things when tidings arrived of the great battle fought at Blenheim on the 13th August, 1704. By the Whigs the news was hailed with transports of joy and pride. No fault, no cause of quarrel, could be remembered by them against the commander whose genius had, in one day, changed the face of Europe, saved the Imperial throne, humbled the House of Bourbon, and secured the Act of Settlement against foreign hostility. The feeling of the Tories was very different. They could not, indeed, without imprudence, openly express regret at an event so glorious to their country; but their congratulations were so cold and sullen as to give deep disgust to the victorious general and his friends.

Godolphin was not a reading man. Whatever time he could spare from business he was in the habit of spending at Newmarket or at the card table. But he was not absolutely indifferent to poetry; and he was too intelligent an observer not to perceive that literature was a

formidable engine of political warfare, and that the great Whig leaders had strengthened their party and raised their character by extending a liberal and judicious patronage to good writers. He was mortified, and not without reason, by the exceeding badness of the poems which appeared in honor of the battle of Blenheim. One of those poems has been rescued from oblivion by the exquisite absurdity of three lines: —

> "Think of two thousand gentlemen at least,
> And each man mounted on his capering beast;
> Into the Danube they were pushed by shoals."

Where to procure better verses the Treasurer did not know. He understood how to negotiate a loan or remit a subsidy; he was also well versed in the history of running horses and fighting cocks; but his acquaintance among the poets was very small. He consulted Halifax; but Halifax affected to decline the office of adviser. He had, he said, done his best, when he had power, to encourage men whose abilities and acquirements might do honor to their country. Those times were over. Other maxims had prevailed. Merit was suffered to pine in obscurity; and the public money was squandered on the undeserving. "I do know," he added, "a gentleman who would celebrate the battle in a manner worthy of the subject. But I will not name him." Godolphin, who was expert at the soft answer which turneth away wrath, and who was under the necessity of paying court to the Whigs, gently replied that there was too much ground for Halifax's complaints, but that what was amiss should in time be rectified, and that in the meantime the services of a man such as Halifax had described should be liberally rewarded. Halifax then mentioned Addison; but, mindful of the dignity as well as of the pecuniary

interest of his friend, insisted that the minister should apply in the most courteous manner to Addison himself; and this Godolphin promised to do.

Addison then occupied a garret up three pairs of stairs, over a small shop in the Haymarket. In this humble lodging he was surprised, on the morning which followed the conversation between Godolphin and Halifax, by a visit from no less a person than the Right Honorable Henry Boyle, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, and afterwards Lord Carleton. This high-born minister had been sent by the Lord Treasurer as ambassador to the needy poet. Addison readily undertook the proposed task, — a task which, to so good a Whig, was probably a pleasure. When the poem was little more than half finished he showed it to Godolphin, who was delighted with it, and particularly with the famous similitude of the angel. Addison was instantly appointed to a commissionership worth about two hundred pounds a year, and was assured that this appointment was only an earnest of greater favors.

The 'Campaign' came forth, and was as much admired by the public as by the minister. It pleases us less on the whole than the 'Epistle to Halifax.' Yet it undoubtedly ranks high among the poems which appeared during the interval between the death of Dryden and the dawn of Pope's genius. The chief merit of the 'Campaign,' we think, is that which was noticed by Johnson, the manly and rational rejection of fiction. The first great poet whose works have come down to us sang of war long before war became a science or a trade. If, in his time, there was enmity between two little Greek towns, each poured forth its crowd of citizens, ignorant of discipline, and armed with implements of labor rudely turned into weapons. On each side appeared conspicuous a

few chiefs, whose wealth had enabled them to procure good armor, horses, and chariots, and whose leisure had enabled them to practise military exercises. One such chief, if he were a man of great strength, agility, and courage, would probably be more formidable than twenty common men; and the force and dexterity with which he flung his spear might have no inconsiderable share in deciding the event of the day. Such were probably the battles with which Homer was familiar. But Homer related the actions of men of a former generation, — of men who sprang from the gods, and communed with the gods face to face; of men one of whom could with ease hurl rocks which two sturdy hinds of a later period would be unable even to lift. He therefore naturally represented their martial exploits as resembling in kind, but far surpassing in magnitude, those of the stoutest and most expert combatants of his own age. Achilles, clad in celestial armor, drawn by celestial coursers, grasping the spear which none but himself could raise, driving all Troy and Lycia before him, and choking Scamander with dead, was only a magnificent exaggeration of the real hero, who, strong, fearless, accustomed to the use of weapons, guarded by a shield and helmet of the best Sidonian fabric, and whirled along by horses of Thessalonian breed, struck down with his own right arm foe after foe. In all rude societies similar notions are found. There are at this day countries where the Life-guardsman Shaw would be considered as a much greater warrior than the Duke of Wellington. Bonaparte loved to describe the astonishment with which the Mamelukes looked at his diminutive figure. Mourad Bey, distinguished above all his fellows by his bodily strength and by the skill with which he managed his horse and his saber, could not believe that a man who

was scarcely five feet high, and rode like a butcher, could be the greatest soldier in Europe.

Homer's descriptions of war had therefore as much truth as poetry requires. But truth was altogether wanting to the performances of those who, writing about battles which had scarcely anything in common with the battles of his times, servilely imitated his manner. The folly of Silius Italicus, in particular, is positively nauseous. He undertook to record in verse the vicissitudes of a great struggle between generals of the first order; and his narrative is made up of the hideous wounds which these generals inflicted with their own hands. Hasdrubal flings a spear, which grazes the shoulder of the consul Nero; but Nero sends his spear into Hasdrubal's side. Fabius slays Thuris and Butes and Maris and Arses, and the long-haired Adherbes, and the gigantic Thylis, and Sapharus and Monæsus, and the trumpeter Morinus. Hannibal runs Perusinus through the groin with a stake, and breaks the backbone of Telesinus with a huge stone. This detestable fashion was copied in modern times, and continued to prevail down to the age of Addison. Several versifiers had described William turning thousands to flight by his single prowess, and dyeing the Boyne with Irish blood. Nay, so estimable a writer as John Philips, the author of the 'Splendid Shilling,' represented Marlborough as having won the battle of Blenheim merely by strength of muscle and skill in fence. The following lines may serve as an example: —

> "Churchill, viewing where
> The violence of Tallard most prevailed,
> Came to oppose his slaughtering arm. With speed
> Precipitate he rode, urging his way
> O'er hills of gasping heroes, and fallen steeds
> Rolling in death. Destruction, grim with blood,

> Attends his furious course. Around his head
> The glowing balls play innocent, while he
> With dire impetuous sway deals fatal blows
> Among the flying Gauls. In Gallic blood
> He dyes his reeking sword, and strews the ground
> With headless ranks. What can they do? Or how
> Withstand his wide-destroying sword?"

Addison, with excellent sense and taste, departed from this ridiculous fashion. He reserved his praise for the qualities which made Marlborough truly great, — energy, sagacity, military science. But above all, the poet extolled the firmness of that mind which, in the midst of confusion, uproar, and slaughter, examined and disposed everything with the serene wisdom of a higher intelligence.

Here it was that he introduced the famous comparison of Marlborough to an angel guiding the whirlwind. We will not dispute the general justice of Johnson's remarks on this passage. But we must point out one circumstance which appears to have escaped all the critics. The extraordinary effect which this simile produced when it first appeared, and which to the following generation seemed inexplicable, is doubtless to be chiefly attributed to a line which most readers now regard as a feeble parenthesis: —

> "Such as, of late, o'er pale Britannia passed."

Addison spoke, not of a storm, but of the storm. The great tempest of November, 1703, the only tempest which in our latitude has equaled the rage of a tropical hurricane, had left a dreadful recollection in the minds of all men. No other tempest was ever in this country the occasion of a parliamentary address or of a public fast. Whole fleets had been cast away. Large mansions had been blown down. One prelate had been buried beneath

the ruins of his palace. London and Bristol had presented the appearance of cities just sacked. Hundreds of families were still in mourning. The prostrate trunks of large trees and the ruins of houses still attested, in all the southern counties, the fury of the blast. The popularity which the simile of the angel enjoyed among Addison's contemporaries has always seemed to us to be a remarkable instance of the advantage which, in rhetoric and poetry, the particular has over the general.

Soon after the 'Campaign,' was published Addison's narrative of his travels in Italy. The first effect produced by this narrative was disappointment. The crowd of readers who expected politics and scandal, speculations on the projects of Victor Amadeus, and anecdotes about the jollities of convents and the amours of cardinals and nuns, were confounded by finding that the writer's mind was much more occupied by the war between the Trojans and Rutulians than by the war between France and Austria; and that he seemed to have heard no scandal of later date than the gallantries of the Empress Faustina. In time, however, the judgment of the many was overruled by that of the few; and before the book was reprinted, it was so eagerly sought that it sold for five times the original price. It is still read with pleasure; the style is pure and flowing; the classical quotations and allusions are numerous and happy; and we are now and then charmed by that singularly humane and delicate humor in which Addison excelled all men. Yet this agreeable work, even when considered merely as the history of a literary tour, may justly be censured on account of its faults of omission. We have already said that, though rich in extracts from the Latin poets, it contains scarcely any references to the Latin orators and historians. We must add that it contains little, or

rather no, information respecting the history and literature of modern Italy. To the best of our remembrance, Addison does not mention Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Boiardo, Berni, Lorenzo de' Medici, or Machiavelli. He coldly tells us that at Ferrara he saw the tomb of Ariosto, and that at Venice he heard the gondoliers sing verses of Tasso. But for Tasso and Ariosto he cared far less than for Valerius Flaccus and Sidonius Apollinaris. The gentle flow of the Ticin brings a line of Silius to his mind. The sulphurous steam of Albula suggests to him several passages of Martial. But he has not a word to say of the illustrious dead of Santa Croce; he crosses the wood of Ravenna without recollecting the Specter Huntsman, and wanders up and down Rimini without one thought of Francesca. At Paris he had eagerly sought an introduction to Boileau; but he seems not to have been at all aware that at Florence he was in the vicinity of a poet with whom Boileau could not sustain a comparison,—of the greatest lyric poet of modern times, Vincenzio Filicaja. This is the more remarkable because Filicaja was the favorite poet of the accomplished Somers, under whose protection Addison traveled, and to whom the account of the travels is dedicated. The truth is, that Addison knew little, and cared less, about the literature of modern Italy. His favorite models were Latin. His favorite critics were French. Half the Tuscan poetry that he had read seemed to him monstrous, and the other half tawdry.

His 'Travels' were followed by the lively opera of 'Rosamond.' This piece was ill set to music, and therefore failed on the stage; but it completely succeeded in print, and is indeed excellent in its kind. The smoothness with which the verses glide, and the elasticity with which they bound, are, to our ears at least, very pleasing. We

are inclined to think that if Addison had left heroic couplets to Pope, and blank verse to Rowe, and had employed himself in writing airy and spirited songs, his reputation as a poet would have stood far higher than it now does. Some years after his death, 'Rosamond' was set to new music by Doctor Arne, and was performed with complete success. Several passages long retained their popularity, and were daily sung, during the latter part of George the Second's reign, at all the harpsichords in England.

While Addison thus amused himself, his prospects, and the prospects of his party, were constantly becoming brighter and brighter. In the spring of 1705 the ministers were freed from the restraint imposed by a House of Commons in which Tories of the most perverse class had the ascendency. The elections were favorable to the Whigs. The coalition which had been tacitly and gradually formed was now openly avowed. The Great Seal was given to Cowper. Somers and Halifax were sworn of the Council. Halifax was sent in the following year to carry the decorations of the Order of the Garter to the Electoral Prince of Hanover, and was accompanied on his honorable mission by Addison, who had just been made Undersecretary of State. The Secretary of State under whom Addison first served was Sir Charles Hedges, a Tory. But Hedges was soon dismissed to make room for the most vehement of Whigs, Charles, Earl of Sunderland. In every department of the State, indeed, the High Churchmen were compelled to give place to their opponents. At the close of 1707 the Tories who still remained in office strove to rally, with Harley at their head. But the attempt, though favored by the Queen, who had always been a Tory at heart, and who had now quarreled with the Duchess of Marlborough, was unsuccessful.

The time was not yet. The Captain-General was at the height of popularity and glory. The Low Church party had a majority in Parliament. The country squires and rectors, though occasionally uttering a savage growl, were for the most part in a state of torpor, which lasted till they were roused into activity, and indeed into madness, by the prosecution of Sacheverell. Harley and his adherents were compelled to retire. The victory of the Whigs was complete. At the general election of 1708, their strength in the House of Commons became irresistible; and before the end of that year, Somers was made Lord President of the Council, and Wharton Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

Addison sat for Malmesbury in the House of Commons which was elected in 1708. But the House of Commons was not the field for him. The bashfulness of his nature made his wit and eloquence useless in debate. He once rose, but could not overcome his diffidence, and ever after remained silent. Nobody can think it strange that a great writer should fail as a speaker. But many, probably, will think it strange that Addison's failure as a speaker should have had no unfavorable effect on his success as a politician. In our time, a man of high rank and great fortune might, though speaking very little and very ill, hold a considerable post. But it would now be inconceivable that a mere adventurer, a man who, when out of office, must live by his pen, should in a few years become successively Undersecretary of State, Chief Secretary for Ireland, and Secretary of State, without some oratorical talent. Addison, without high birth and with little property, rose to a post which dukes, the heads of the great houses of Talbot, Russell, and Bentinck, have thought it an honor to fill. Without opening his lips in debate, he rose to a post the highest that Chatham or

Fox ever reached. And this he did before he had been nine years in Parliament. We must look for the explanation of this seeming miracle to the peculiar circumstances in which that generation was placed. During the interval which elapsed between the time when the censorship of the press ceased and the time when parliamentary proceedings began to be freely reported, literary talents were, to a public man, of much more importance, and oratorical talents of much less importance, than in our time. At present, the best way of giving rapid and wide publicity to a fact or an argument is to introduce that fact or argument into a speech made in Parliament. If a political tract were to appear superior to the 'Conduct of the Allies,' or to the best numbers of the *Freeholder*, the circulation of such a tract would be languid indeed when compared with the circulation of every remarkable word uttered in the deliberations of the legislature. A speech made in the House of Commons at four in the morning is on thirty thousand tables before ten. A speech made on the Monday is read on the Wednesday by multitudes in Antrim and Aberdeenshire. The orator, by the help of the shorthand writer, has to a great extent superseded the pamphleteer. It was not so in the reign of Anne. The best speech could then produce no effect except on those who heard it. It was only by means of the press that the opinion of the public without doors could be influenced; and the opinion of the public without doors could not but be of the highest importance in a country governed by parliaments, and indeed at that time governed by triennial parliaments. The pen was, therefore, a more formidable political engine than the tongue. Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox contended only in Parliament. But Walpole and Pulteney, the Pitt and Fox of an earlier period, had not done half of what was necessary when

they sat down amidst the acclamations of the House of Commons. They had still to plead their cause before the country, and this they could only do by means of the press. Their works are now forgotten. But it is certain that there were in Grub Street few more assiduous scribblers of Thoughts, Letters, Answers, Remarks, than these two great chiefs of parties. Pulteney, when leader of the Opposition and possessed of thirty thousand a year, edited the *Craftsman*. Walpole, though not a man of literary habits, was the author of at least ten pamphlets, and retouched and corrected many more. These facts sufficiently show of how great importance literary assistance then was to the contending parties. St. John was certainly, in Anne's reign, the best Tory speaker; Cowper was probably the best Whig speaker. But it may well be doubted whether St. John did so much for the Tories as Swift, and whether Cowper did so much for the Whigs as Addison. When these things are duly considered, it will not be thought strange that Addison should have climbed higher in the State than any other Englishman has ever, by means merely of literary talents, been able to climb. Swift would, in all probability, have climbed as high if he had not been encumbered by his cassock and his pudding sleeves. As far as the homage of the great went, Swift had as much of it as if he had been Lord Treasurer.

To the influence which Addison derived from his literary talents was added all the influence which arises from character. The world, always ready to think the worst of needy political adventurers, was forced to make one exception. Restlessness, violence, audacity, laxity of principle, are the vices ordinarily attributed to that class of men. But faction itself could not deny that Addison had, through all changes of fortune, been strictly faithful

to his early opinions and to his early friends; that his integrity was without stain; that his whole deportment indicated a fine sense of the becoming; that in the utmost heat of controversy, his zeal was tempered by a regard for truth, humanity, and social decorum; that no outrage could ever provoke him to retaliation unworthy of a Christian and a gentleman; and that his only faults were a too sensitive delicacy, and a modesty which amounted to bashfulness.

He was undoubtedly one of the most popular men of his time; and much of his popularity he owed, we believe, to that very timidity which his friends lamented. That timidity often prevented him from exhibiting his talents to the best advantage. But it propitiated Nemesis. It averted that envy which would otherwise have been excited by fame so splendid, and by so rapid an elevation. No man is so great a favorite with the public as he who is at once an object of admiration, of respect, and of pity; and such were the feelings which Addison inspired. Those who enjoyed the privilege of hearing his familiar conversation declared with one voice that it was superior even to his writings. The brilliant Mary Montagu said that she had known all the wits, and that Addison was the best company in the world. The malignant Pope was forced to own that there was a charm in Addison's talk which could be found nowhere else. Swift, when burning with animosity against the Whigs, could not but confess to Stella that, after all, he had never known any associate so agreeable as Addison. Steele, an excellent judge of lively conversation, said that the conversation of Addison was at once the most polite and the most mirthful that could be imagined; that it was Terence and Catullus in one, heightened by an exquisite something which was neither Terence nor Catullus, but Addison

alone. Young, an excellent judge of serious conversation, said that when Addison was at his ease he went on in a noble strain of thought and language, so as to chain the attention of every hearer. Nor were Addison's great colloquial powers more admirable than the courtesy and softness of heart which appeared in his conversation. At the same time, it would be too much to say that he was wholly devoid of the malice which is, perhaps, inseparable from a keen sense of the ludicrous. He had one habit which both Swift and Stella applauded, and which we hardly know how to blame. If his first attempts to set a presuming dunce right were ill received, he changed his tone, "assented with civil leer," and lured the flattered coxcomb deeper and deeper into absurdity. That such was his practice we should, we think, have guessed from his works. The *Tatler's* criticisms on Mr. Softly's sonnet, and the *Spectator's* dialogue with the politician who is so zealous for the honor of Lady Q—p—t—s, are excellent specimens of this innocent mischief.

Such were Addison's talents for conversation. But his rare gifts were not exhibited to crowds or to strangers. As soon as he entered a large company, as soon as he saw an unknown face, his lips were sealed, and his manners became constrained. None who met him only in great assemblies would have been able to believe that he was the same man who had often kept a few friends listening and laughing round a table from the time when the play ended till the clock of St. Paul's in Covent Garden struck four. Yet even at such a table he was not seen to the best advantage. To enjoy his conversation in the highest perfection, it was necessary to be alone with him, and to hear him, in his own phrase, think aloud. "There is no such thing," he used to say, "as real conversation, but between two persons."

This timidity — a timidity surely neither ungraceful nor unamiable — led Addison into the two most serious faults which can with justice be imputed to him. He found that wine broke the spell which lay on his fine intellect, and was therefore too easily seduced into convivial excess. Such excess was in that age regarded, even by grave men, as the most venial of all peccadilloes, and was so far from being a mark of ill-breeding that it was almost essential to the character of a fine gentleman. But the smallest speck is seen on a white ground; and almost all the biographers of Addison have said something about this failing. Of any other statesman or writer of Queen Anne's reign, we should no more think of saying that he sometimes took too much wine than that he wore a long wig and a sword.

To the excessive modesty of Addison's nature we must ascribe another fault which generally arises from a very different cause. He became a little too fond of seeing himself surrounded by a small circle of admirers, to whom he was as a king, or rather as a god. All these men were far inferior to him in ability, and some of them had very serious faults. Nor did those faults escape his observation; for if ever there was an eye which saw through and through men, it was the eye of Addison. But with the keenest observation, and the finest sense of the ridiculous, he had a large charity. The feeling with which he looked on most of his humble companions was one of benevolence, slightly tinctured with contempt. He was at perfect ease in their company; he was grateful for their devoted attachment; and he loaded them with benefits. Their veneration for him appears to have exceeded that with which Johnson was regarded by Boswell, or Warburton by Hurd. It was not in the power of adulation to turn such a head or deprave such a heart as Addison's.

But it must in candor be admitted that he contracted some of the faults which can scarcely be avoided by any person who is so unfortunate as to be the oracle of a small literary coterie.

One member of this little society was Eustace Budgell, a young Templar of some literature, and a distant relation of Addison. There was at this time no stain on the character of Budgell, and it is not improbable that his career would have been prosperous and honorable if the life of his cousin had been prolonged. But when the master was laid in the grave, the disciple broke loose from all restraint, descended rapidly from one degree of vice and misery to another, ruined his fortune by follies, attempted to repair it by crimes, and at length closed a wicked and unhappy life by self-murder. Yet, to the last, the wretched man, gambler, lampooner, cheat, forger as he was, retained his affection and veneration for Addison, and recorded those feelings in the last lines which he traced before he hid himself from infamy under London Bridge.

Another of Addison's favorite companions was Ambrose Philips, a good Whig and a middling poet, who had the honor of bringing into fashion a species of composition which has been called, after his name, Namby-Pamby. But the most remarkable members of the little senate, as Pope long afterwards called it, were Richard Steele and Thomas Tickell.

Steele had known Addison from childhood. They had been together at the Charterhouse and at Oxford; but circumstances had then, for a time, separated them widely. Steele had left college without taking a degree, had been disinherited by a rich relation, had led a vagrant life, had served in the army, had tried to find the philosopher's stone, and had written a religious treatise and several

comedies. He was one of those people whom it is impossible either to hate or to respect. His temper was sweet, his affections warm, his spirits lively, his passions strong, and his principles weak. His life was spent in sinning and repenting; in inculcating what was right, and doing what was wrong. In speculation, he was a man of piety and honor; in practice, he was much of the rake, and a little of the swindler. He was, however, so good-natured that it was not easy to be seriously angry with him, and that even rigid moralists felt more inclined to pity than to blame him, when he diced himself into a spunging-house, or drank himself into a fever. Addison regarded Steele with kindness not unmingled with scorn; tried, with little success, to keep him out of scrapes; introduced him to the great; procured a good place for him; corrected his plays; and, though by no means rich, lent him large sums of money. One of these loans appears, from a letter dated in August, 1708, to have amounted to a thousand pounds. These pecuniary transactions probably led to frequent bickerings. It is said that on one occasion Steele's negligence, or dishonesty, provoked Addison to repay himself by the help of a bailiff. We cannot join with Miss Aikin in rejecting this story. Johnson heard it from Savage, who heard it from Steele. Few private transactions which took place a hundred and twenty years ago are proved by stronger evidence than this. But we can by no means agree with those who condemn Addison's severity. The most amiable of mankind may well be moved to indignation when what he has earned hardly, and lent with great inconvenience to himself, for the purpose of relieving a friend in distress, is squandered with insane profusion. We will illustrate our meaning by an example which is not the less striking because it is taken from fiction. Dr. Harrison, in Fielding's 'Amelia,' is

represented as the most benevolent of human beings ; yet he takes in execution, not only the goods, but the person of his friend Booth. Dr. Harrison resorts to this strong measure because he has been informed that Booth, while pleading poverty as an excuse for not paying just debts, has been buying fine jewelry and setting up a coach. No person who is well acquainted with Steele's life and correspondence can doubt that he behaved quite as ill to Addison as Booth was accused of behaving to Dr. Harrison. The real history, we have little doubt, was something like this : A letter comes to Addison, imploring help in pathetic terms, and promising reformation and speedy repayment. Poor Dick declares that he has not an inch of candle, or a bushel of coals, or credit with the butcher for a shoulder of mutton. Addison is moved. He determines to deny himself some medals which are wanting to his series of the Twelve Cæsars ; to put off buying the new edition of Bayle's Dictionary; and to wear his old sword and buckles another year. In this way he manages to send a hundred pounds to his friend. The next day he calls on Steele, and finds scores of gentlemen and ladies assembled. The fiddles are playing. The table is groaning under champagne, burgundy, and pyramids of sweetmeats. Is it strange that a man whose kindness is thus abused should send sheriff's officers to reclaim what is due to him ?

Tickell was a young man, fresh from Oxford, who had introduced himself to public notice by writing a most ingenious and graceful little poem in praise of the opera of 'Rosamond.' He deserved, and at length attained, the first place in Addison's friendship. For a time Steele and Tickell were on good terms. But they loved Addison too much to love each other, and at length became as bitter enemies as the rival bulls in Virgil.

At the close of 1708 Wharton became Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and appointed Addison Chief Secretary. Addison was consequently under the necessity of quitting London for Dublin. Besides the chief-secretaryship, which was then worth about two thousand pounds a year, he obtained a patent appointing him Keeper of the Irish Records for life, with a salary of three or four hundred a year. Budgell accompanied his cousin in the capacity of private secretary.

Wharton and Addison had nothing in common but Whiggism. The Lord Lieutenant was not only licentious and corrupt, but was distinguished from other libertines and jobbers by a callous impudence which presented the strongest contrast to the Secretary's gentleness and delicacy. Many parts of the Irish administration at this time appear to have deserved serious blame. But against Addison there was not a murmur. He long afterwards asserted, what all the evidence which we have ever seen tends to prove, that his diligence and integrity gained the friendship of all the most considerable persons in Ireland.

The parliamentary career of Addison in Ireland has, we think, wholly escaped the notice of all his biographers. He was elected member for the borough of Cavan in the summer of 1709; and in the journals of two sessions his name frequently occurs. Some of the entries appear to indicate that he so far overcame his timidity as to make speeches. Nor is this by any means improbable; for the Irish House of Commons was a far less formidable audience than the English House; and many tongues which were tied by fear in the greater assembly became fluent in the smaller. Gerard Hamilton, for example, who, from fear of losing the fame gained by his single speech, sat mute at Westminster during forty years, spoke with great effect at Dublin when he was secretary to Lord Halifax.

While Addison was in Ireland an event occurred to which he owes his high and permanent rank among British writers. As yet his fame rested on performances which, though highly respectable, were not built for duration, and which would, if he had produced nothing else, have now been almost forgotten—on some excellent Latin verses, on some English verses which occasionally rose above mediocrity, and on a book of travels, agreeably written, but not indicating any extraordinary powers of mind. These works showed him to be a man of taste, sense, and learning. The time had come when he was to prove himself a man of genius, and to enrich our literature with compositions which will live as long as the English language.

In the spring of 1709 Steele formed a literary project of which he was far indeed from foreseeing the consequences. Periodical papers had during many years been published in London. Most of these were political; but in some of them questions of morality, taste, and love-casuistry had been discussed. The literary merit of these works was small indeed; and even their names are now known only to the curious.

Steele had been appointed Gazetteer by Sunderland, at the request, it is said, of Addison, and thus had access to foreign intelligence earlier and more authentic than was in those times within the reach of an ordinary news-writer. This circumstance seems to have suggested to him the scheme of publishing a periodical paper on a new plan. It was to appear on the days on which the post left London for the country, which were, in that generation, the Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. It was to contain the foreign news, accounts of theatrical representations, and the literary gossip of Will's and of the Grecian. It was also to contain remarks on the fash-

ionable topics of the day, compliments to beauties, pasquinades on noted sharpers, and criticisms on popular preachers. The aim of Steele does not appear to have been at first higher than this. He was not ill qualified to conduct the work which he had planned. His public intelligence he drew from the best sources. He knew the town, and had paid dear for his knowledge. He had read much more than the dissipated men of that time were in the habit of reading. He was a rake among scholars, and a scholar among rakes. His style was easy and not incorrect; and though his wit and humor were of no high order, his gay animal spirits imparted to his compositions an air of vivacity which ordinary readers could hardly distinguish from comic genius. His writings have been well compared to those light wines which, though deficient in body and flavor, are yet a pleasant small drink, if not kept too long or carried too far.

Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire, Astrologer, was an imaginary person, almost as well known in that age as Mr. Paul Pry or Mr. Samuel Pickwick in ours. Swift had assumed the name of Bickerstaff in a satirical pamphlet against Partridge, the maker of almanacs. Partridge had been fool enough to publish a furious reply. Bickerstaff had rejoined in a second pamphlet still more diverting than the first. All the wits had combined to keep up the joke, and the town was long in convulsions of laughter. Steele determined to employ the name which this controversy had made popular; and in April, 1709, it was announced that Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire, Astrologer, was about to publish a paper called the *Tatler*.

Addison had not been consulted about this scheme; but as soon as he heard of it he determined to give his assistance. The effect of that assistance cannot be better described than in Steele's own words. "I fared," he said,

"like a distressed prince who calls in a powerful neighbor to his aid. I was undone by my auxiliary. When I had once called him in, I could not subsist without dependence on him." "The paper," he says elsewhere, "was advanced indeed. It was raised to a greater thing than I intended it."

It is probable that Addison, when he sent across St. George's Channel his first contributions to the *Tatler*, had no notion of the extent and variety of his own powers. He was the possessor of a vast mine, rich with a hundred ores. But he had been acquainted only with the least precious part of his treasures, and had hitherto contented himself with producing sometimes copper and sometimes lead, intermingled with a little silver. All at once, and by mere accident, he had lighted on an inexhaustible vein of the finest gold.

The mere choice and arrangement of his words would have sufficed to make his essays classical. For never, not even by Dryden, not even by Temple, had the English language been written with such sweetness, grace, and facility. But this was the smallest part of Addison's praise. Had he clothed his thoughts in the half French style of Horace Walpole, or in the half Latin style of Dr. Johnson, or in the half German jargon of the present day, his genius would have triumphed over all faults of manner. As a moral satirist he stands unrivaled. If ever the best *Tatlers* and *Spectators* were equaled in their own kind, we should be inclined to guess that it must have been by the lost comedies of Menander.

In wit, properly so called, Addison was not inferior to Cowley or Butler. No single ode of Cowley contains so many happy analogies as are crowded into the lines to Sir Godfrey Kneller; and we would undertake to collect from the *Spectators* as great a number of ingenious illustrations

as can be found in 'Hudibras.' The still higher faculty of invention Addison possessed in still larger measure. The numerous fictions, generally original, often wild and grotesque, but always singularly graceful and happy, which are found in his essays, fully entitle him to the rank of a great poet—a rank to which his metrical compositions give him no claim. As an observer of life, of manners, of all the shades of human character, he stands in the first class. And what he observed he had the art of communicating in two widely different ways. He could describe virtues, vices, habits, whims, as well as Clarendon. But he could do something better. He could call human beings into existence, and make them exhibit themselves. If we wish to find anything more vivid than Addison's best portraits, we must go either to Shakespeare or to Cervantes.

But what shall we say of Addison's humor — of his sense of the ludicrous, of his power of awakening that sense in others, and of drawing mirth from incidents which occur every day, and from little peculiarities of temper and manner, such as may be found in every man? We feel the charm; we give ourselves up to it; but we strive in vain to analyze it.

Perhaps the best way of describing Addison's peculiar pleasantry is to compare it with the pleasantry of some other great satirists. The three most eminent masters of the art of ridicule during the eighteenth century were, we conceive, Addison, Swift, and Voltaire. Which of the three had the greatest power of moving laughter may be questioned. But each of them, within his own domain, was supreme.

Voltaire is the prince of buffoons. His merriment is without disguise or restraint. He gambols; he grins; he shakes the sides; he points the finger; he turns up the nose; he shoots out the tongue. The manner of Swift

is the very opposite to this. He moves laughter, but never joins in it. He appears in his works such as he appeared in society. All the company are convulsed with merriment, while the Dean, the author of all the mirth, preserves an invincible gravity, and even sourness of aspect, and gives utterance to the most eccentric and ludicrous fancies, with the air of a man reading the commination service.

The manner of Addison is as remote from that of Swift as from that of Voltaire. He neither laughs out like the French wit, nor, like the Irish wit, throws a double portion of severity into his countenance while laughing inwardly; but preserves a look peculiarly his own — a look of demure serenity, disturbed only by an arch sparkle of the eye, an almost imperceptible elevation of the brow, an almost imperceptible curl of the lip. His tone is never that either of a Jack Pudding or of a cynic. It is that of a gentleman, in whom the quickest sense of the ridiculous is constantly tempered by good nature and good breeding.

We own that the humor of Addison is, in our opinion, of a more delicious flavor than the humor of either Swift or Voltaire. Thus much, at least, is certain, that both Swift and Voltaire have been successfully mimicked, and that no man has yet been able to mimic Addison. The letter of the Abbé Coyer to Pansophe is Voltaire all over, and imposed, during a long time, on the Academicians of Paris. There are passages in Arbuthnot's satirical works which we, at least, cannot distinguish from Swift's best writing. But of the many eminent men who have made Addison their model, though several have copied his mere diction with happy effect, none have been able to catch the tone of his pleasantry. In the *World*, in the *Connoisseur*, in the *Mirror*, in the *Lounger*, there are numerous papers written in obvious imitation of his *Tatlers* and

Spectators. Most of these papers have some merit; many are very lively and amusing; but there is not a single one which could be passed off as Addison's on a critic of the smallest perspicacity.

But that which chiefly distinguishes Addison from Swift, from Voltaire, from almost all the other great masters of ridicule, is the grace, the nobleness, the moral purity which we find even in his merriment. Severity, gradually hardening and darkening into misanthropy, characterizes the works of Swift. The nature of Voltaire was, indeed, not inhuman; but he venerated nothing. Neither in the masterpieces of art nor in the purest examples of virtue, neither in the Great First Cause nor in the awful enigma of the grave, could he see anything but subjects for drollery. The more solemn and august the theme, the more monkey-like was his grimacing and chattering. The mirth of Swift is the mirth of Mephistophiles; the mirth of Voltaire is the mirth of Puck. If, as Soame Jenyns oddly imagined, a portion of the happiness of seraphim and just men made perfect be derived from an exquisite perception of the ludicrous, their mirth must surely be none other than the mirth of Addison — a mirth consistent with tender compassion for all that is frail, and with profound reverence for all that is sublime. Nothing great, nothing amiable, no moral duty, no doctrine of natural or revealed religion, has ever been associated by Addison with any degrading idea. His humanity is without a parallel in literary history. The highest proof of virtue is to possess boundless power without abusing it. No kind of power is more formidable than the power of making men ridiculous; and that power Addison possessed in boundless measure. How grossly that power was abused by Swift and by Voltaire is well known. But of Addison it may be confidently affirmed that he has

blackened no man's character; nay, that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find in all the volumes which he has left us a single taunt which can be called ungenerous or unkind. Yet he had detractors whose malignity might have seemed to justify as terrible a revenge as that which men not superior to him in genius wreaked on Bettesworth and on Franc de Pompignan. He was a politician; he was the best writer of his party; he lived in times of fierce excitement, in times when persons of high character and station stooped to scurrility such as is now practised only by the basest of mankind. Yet no provocation and no example could induce him to return railing for railing.

Of the service which his essays rendered to morality it is difficult to speak too highly. It is true that, when the *Tatler* appeared, that age of outrageous profaneness and licentiousness which followed the Restoration had passed away. Jeremy Collier had shamed the theaters into something which, compared with the excesses of Etherege and Wycherley, might be called decency. Yet there still lingered in the public mind a pernicious notion that there was some connection between genius and profligacy, between the domestic virtues and the sullen formality of the Puritans. That error it is the glory of Addison to have dispelled. He taught the nation that the faith and the morality of Hale and Tillotson might be found in company with wit more sparkling than the wit of Congreve, and with humor richer than the humor of Vanbrugh. So effectually, indeed, did he retort on vice the mockery which had recently been directed against virtue, that, since his time, the open violation of decency has always been considered among us as the mark of a fool. And this revolution, the greatest and most salutary ever effected by any satirist, he accomplished, be it remembered, without writing one personal lampoon.

In the early contributions of Addison to the *Tatler*, his peculiar powers were not fully exhibited. Yet from the first his superiority to all his coadjutors was evident. Some of his later *Tatlers* are fully equal to anything that he ever wrote. Among the portraits, we most admire Tom Folio, Ned Softly, and the Political Upholsterer. The proceedings of the Court of Honor, the Thermometer of Zeal, the story of the Frozen Words, the Memoirs of the Shilling, are excellent specimens of that ingenious and lively species of fiction in which Addison excelled all men. There is one still better paper of the same class. But though that paper, a hundred and thirty-three years ago, was probably thought as edifying as one of Smalridge's sermons, we dare not indicate it to the squeamish readers of the nineteenth century.

During the session of Parliament which commenced in November, 1709, and which the impeachment of Sacheverell has made memorable, Addison appears to have resided in London. The *Tatler* was now more popular than any periodical paper had ever been; and his connection with it was generally known. It was not known, however, that almost everything good in the *Tatler* was his. The truth is, that the fifty or sixty numbers which we owe to him were not merely the best, but so decidedly the best that any five of them are more valuable than all the two hundred numbers in which he had no share.

He required, at this time, all the solace which he could derive from literary success. The Queen had always disliked the Whigs. She had during some years disliked the Marlborough family. But, reigning by a disputed title, she could not venture directly to oppose herself to a majority of both Houses of Parliament; and, engaged as she was in a war on the event of which her own crown was staked, she could not venture to disgrace a great and

successful general. But at length, in the year 1710, the cause which had restrained her from showing her aversion to the Low Church party ceased to operate. The trial of Sacheverell produced an outbreak of public feeling scarcely less violent than the outbreaks which we can ourselves remember in 1820 and in 1831. The country gentlemen, the country clergymen, the rabble of the towns, were all, for once, on the same side. It was clear that, if a general election took place before the excitement abated, the Tories would have a majority. The services of Marlborough had been so splendid that they were no longer necessary. The Queen's throne was secure from all attack on the part of Louis. Indeed, it seemed much more likely that the English and German armies would divide the spoils of Versailles and Marli than that a Marshal of France would bring back the Pretender to St. James's. The Queen, acting by the advice of Harley, determined to dismiss her servants. In June the change commenced. Sunderland was the first who fell. The Tories exulted over his fall. The Whigs tried, during a few weeks, to persuade themselves that her Majesty had acted only from personal dislike to the Secretary, and that she meditated no further alteration. But early in August Godolphin was surprised by a letter from Anne, which directed him to break his white staff. Even after this event, the irresolution or dissimulation of Harley kept up the hopes of the Whigs during another month; and then the ruin became rapid and violent. The Parliament was dissolved. The ministers were turned out. The Tories were called to office. The tide of popularity ran violently in favor of the High Church party. That party, feeble in the late House of Commons, was now irresistible. The power which the Tories had thus suddenly acquired they used with blind and stupid ferocity. The howl which the

whole pack set up for prey and for blood appalled even him who had roused and unchained them. When, at this distance of time, we calmly review the conduct of the discarded ministers, we cannot but feel a movement of indignation at the injustice with which they were treated. No body of men had ever administered the government with more energy, ability, and moderation; and their success had been proportioned to their wisdom. They had saved Holland and Germany. They had humbled France. They had, as it seemed, all but torn Spain from the House of Bourbon. They had made England the first power in Europe. At home they had united England and Scotland. They had respected the rights of conscience and the liberty of the subject. They retired, leaving their country at the height of prosperity and glory. And yet they were pursued to their retreat by such a roar of obloquy as was never raised against the government which threw away thirteen colonies, or against the government which sent a gallant army to perish in the ditches of Walcheren.

None of the Whigs suffered more in the general wreck than Addison. He had just sustained some heavy pecuniary losses, of the nature of which we are imperfectly informed, when his secretaryship was taken from him. He had reason to believe that he should also be deprived of the small Irish office which he held by patent. He had just resigned his fellowship. It seems probable that he had already ventured to raise his eyes to a great lady, and that, while his political friends were in power, and while his own fortunes were rising, he had been, in the phrase of the romances which were then fashionable, permitted to hope. But Mr. Addison the ingenious writer and Mr. Addison the Chief Secretary were, in her ladyship's opinion, two very different persons. All these

calamities united, however, could not disturb the serene cheerfulness of a mind conscious of innocence, and rich in its own wealth. He told his friends, with smiling resignation, that they ought to admire his philosophy; that he had lost at once his fortune, his place, his fellowship, and his mistress, that he must think of turning tutor again, and yet that his spirits were as good as ever.

He had one consolation. Of the unpopularity which his friends had incurred, he had no share. Such was the esteem with which he was regarded that, while the most violent measures were taken for the purpose of forcing Tory members on Whig corporations, he was returned to Parliament without even a contest. Swift, who was now in London, and who had already determined on quitting the Whigs, wrote to Stella in these remarkable words: "The Tories carry it among the new members six to one. Mr. Addison's election has passed easy and undisputed; and I believe if he had a mind to be king, he would hardly be refused."

The good will with which the Tories regarded Addison is the more honorable to him because it had not been purchased by any concession on his part. During the general election he published a political journal, entitled the *Whig Examiner*. Of that journal it may be sufficient to say that Johnson, in spite of his strong political prejudices, pronounced it to be superior in wit to any of Swift's writings on the other side. When it ceased to appear, Swift, in a letter to Stella, expressed his exultation at the death of so formidable an antagonist. "He might well rejoice," says Johnson, "at the death of that which he could not have killed." "On no occasion," he adds, "was the genius of Addison more vigorously exerted, and on none did the superiority of his powers more evidently appear."

The only use which Addison appears to have made of the favor with which he was regarded by the Tories was to save some of his friends from the general ruin of the Whig party. He felt himself to be in a situation which made it his duty to take a decided part in politics. But the case of Steele and of Ambrose Philips was different. For Philips, Addison even condescended to solicit; with what success we have not ascertained. Steele held two places. He was Gazetteer, and he was also a Commissioner of Stamps. The Gazette was taken from him. But he was suffered to retain his place in the Stamp Office, on an implied understanding that he should not be active against the new government; and he was, during more than two years, induced by Addison to observe this armistice with tolerable fidelity.

Isaac Bickerstaff accordingly became silent upon politics, and the article of news, which had once formed about one-third of his paper, altogether disappeared. The *Tatler* had completely changed its character. It was now nothing but a series of essays on books, morals, and manners. Steele therefore resolved to bring it to a close, and to commence a new work on an improved plan. It was announced that this new work would be published daily. The undertaking was generally regarded as bold, or rather rash; but the event amply justified the confidence with which Steele relied on the fertility of Addison's genius. On the 2d of January, 1711, appeared the last *Tatler*. At the beginning of March following appeared the first of an incomparable series of papers, containing observations on life and literature by an imaginary spectator.

The Spectator himself was conceived and drawn by Addison; and it is not easy to doubt that the portrait was meant to be in some features a likeness of the

painter. The Spectator is a gentleman who, after passing a studious youth at the university, has traveled on classic ground, and has bestowed much attention on curious points of antiquity. He has, on his return, fixed his residence in London, and has observed all the forms of life which are to be found in that great city; has daily listened to the wits of Will's, has smoked with the philosophers of the Grecian, and has mingled with the parsons at Child's, and with the politicians at the St. James's. In the morning, he often listens to the hum of the Exchange; in the evening, his face is constantly to be seen in the pit of Drury Lane Theater. But an insurmountable bashfulness prevents him from opening his mouth except in a small circle of intimate friends.

These friends were first sketched by Steele. Four of the club, the templar, the clergyman, the soldier, and the merchant, were uninteresting figures, fit only for a background. But the other two, an old country baronet and an old town rake, though not delineated with a very delicate pencil, had some good strokes. Addison took the rude outlines into his own hands, retouched them, colored them, and is in truth the creator of the Sir Roger de Coverley and the Will Honeycomb with whom we are all familiar.

The plan of the *Spectator* must be allowed to be both original and eminently happy. Every valuable essay in the series may be read with pleasure separately; yet the five or six hundred essays form a whole, and a whole which has the interest of a novel. It must be remembered, too, that at that time no novel, giving a lively and powerful picture of the common life and manners of England, had appeared. Richardson was working as a compositor. Fielding was robbing birds' nests. Smollett was not yet born. The narrative, therefore, which con-

nects together the Spectator's essays gave to our ancestors their first taste of an exquisite and untried pleasure. That narrative was, indeed, constructed with no art or labor. The events were such events as occur every day. Sir Roger comes up to town to see Eugenio, as the worthy baronet always calls Prince Eugene, goes with the Spectator on the water to Spring Gardens, walks among the tombs in the Abbey, and is frightened by the Mohawks, but conquers his apprehension so far as to go to the theater when the 'Distressed Mother' is acted. The Spectator pays a visit in the summer to Coverley Hall, is charmed with the old house, the old butler, and the old chaplain, eats a jack caught by Will Wimble, rides to the assizes, and hears a point of law discussed by Tom Touchy. At last a letter from the honest butler brings to the club the news that Sir Roger is dead. Will Honeycomb marries and reforms at sixty. The club breaks up, and the Spectator resigns his functions. Such events can hardly be said to form a plot; yet they are related with such truth, such grace, such wit, such humor, such pathos, such knowledge of the human heart, such knowledge of the ways of the world, that they charm us on the hundredth perusal. We have not the least doubt that if Addison had written a novel on an extensive plan, it would have been superior to any that we possess. As it is, he is entitled to be considered not only as the greatest of the English essayists, but as the forerunner of the great English novelists.

We say this of Addison alone; for Addison is the Spectator. About three-sevenths of the work are his; and it is no exaggeration to say that his worst essay is as good as the best essay of any of his coadjutors. His best essays approach near to absolute perfection; nor is their excellence more wonderful than their variety. His

invention never seems to flag; nor is he ever under the necessity of repeating himself, or of wearing out a subject. There are no dregs in his wine. He regales us after the fashion of that prodigal nabob who held that there was only one good glass in a bottle. As soon as we have tasted the first sparkling foam of a jest, it is withdrawn, and a fresh draught of nectar is at our lips. On the Monday, we have an allegory as lively and ingenious as Lucian's 'Auction of Lives'; on the Tuesday, an Eastern apologue as richly colored as the tales of Scheherezade; on the Wednesday, a character described with the skill of La Bruyère; on the Thursday, a scene from common life, equal to the best chapters in the 'Vicar of Wakefield'; on the Friday, some sly Horatian pleasantry on fashionable follies, — on hoops, patches, or puppet-shows; and on the Saturday, a religious meditation, which will bear a comparison with the finest passages in Massillon.

It is dangerous to select where there is so much that deserves the highest praise. We will venture, however, to say that any person who wishes to form a just notion of the extent and variety of Addison's powers will do well to read at one sitting the following papers: the two Visits to the Abbey, the Visit to the Exchange, the Journal of the Retired Citizen, the Vision of Mirza, the Transmigrations of Pug the Monkey, and the Death of Sir Roger de Coverley.

The least valuable of Addison's contributions to the *Spectator* are, in the judgment of our age, his critical papers. Yet his critical papers are always luminous, and often ingenious. The very worst of them must be regarded as creditable to him, when the character of the school in which he had been trained is fairly considered. The best of them were much too good for his readers.

In truth, he was not so far behind our generation as he was before his own. No essays in the *Spectator* were more censured and derided than those in which he raised his voice against the contempt with which our fine old ballads were regarded, and showed the scoffers that the same gold which, burnished and polished, gives luster to the Æneid and the Odes of Horace, is mingled with the rude dross of 'Chevy Chase.'

It is not strange that the success of the *Spectator* should have been such as no similar work has ever obtained. The number of copies daily distributed was at first three thousand. It subsequently increased, and had risen to near four thousand when the stamp tax was imposed. That tax was fatal to a crowd of journals. The *Spectator*, however, stood its ground, doubled its price, and, though its circulation fell off, still yielded a large revenue both to the State and to the authors. For particular papers the demand was immense; of some, it is said, twenty thousand copies were required. But this was not all. To have the *Spectator* served up every morning with the bohea and rolls was a luxury for the few. The majority were content to wait till essays enough had appeared to form a volume. Ten thousand copies of each volume were immediately taken off, and new editions were called for. It must be remembered that the population of England was then hardly a third of what it now is. The number of Englishmen who were in the habit of reading was probably not a sixth of what it now is. A shopkeeper or a farmer who found any pleasure in literature was a rarity. Nay, there was doubtless more than one knight of the shire whose country seat did not contain ten books, receipt books and books on farriery included. In these circumstances the sale of the *Spectator* must be considered as indicating a

popularity quite as great as that of the most successful works of Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Dickens in our own time.

At the close of 1712 the *Spectator* ceased to appear. It was probably felt that the short-faced gentleman and his club had been long enough before the town; and that it was time to withdraw them, and to replace them by a new set of characters. In a few weeks the first number of the *Guardian* was published. But the *Guardian* was unfortunate both in its birth and in its death. It began in dullness, and disappeared in a tempest of faction. The original plan was bad. Addison contributed nothing till sixty-six numbers had appeared; and it was then impossible to make the *Guardian* what the *Spectator* had been. Nestor Ironside and the Miss Lizards were people to whom even he could impart no interest. He could only furnish some excellent little essays, both serious and comic; and this he did.

Why Addison gave no assistance to the *Guardian* during the first two months of its existence, is a question which has puzzled the editors and biographers, but which seems to us to admit of a very easy solution. He was then engaged in bringing his 'Cato' on the stage.

The first four acts of this drama had been lying in his desk since his return from Italy. His modest and sensitive nature shrank from the risk of a public and shameful failure; and though all who saw the manuscript were loud in praise, some thought it possible that an audience might become impatient even of very good rhetoric, and advised Addison to print the play without hazarding a representation. At length, after many fits of apprehension, the poet yielded to the urgency of his political friends, who hoped that the public would discover some analogy between the followers of Cæsar and the Tories,

between Sempronius and the apostate Whigs, between Cato, struggling to the last for the liberties of Rome, and the band of patriots who still stood firm round Halifax and Wharton.

Addison gave the play to the managers of Drury Lane Theater, without stipulating for any advantage to himself. They therefore thought themselves bound to spare no cost in scenery and dresses. The decorations, it is true, would not have pleased the skillful eye of Mr. Macready. Juba's waistcoat blazed with gold lace; Marcia's hoop was worthy of a duchess on the birthday; and Cato wore a wig worth fifty guineas. The prologue was written by Pope, and is undoubtedly a dignified and spirited composition. The part of the hero was excellently played by Booth. Steele undertook to pack a house. The boxes were in a blaze with the stars of the Peers in Opposition. The pit was crowded with attentive and friendly listeners from the Inns of Court and the literary coffee-houses. Sir Gilbert Heathcote, Governor of the Bank of England, was at the head of a powerful body of auxiliaries from the City, warm men and true Whigs, but better known at Jonathan's and Garraway's than in the haunts of wits and critics.

These precautions were quite superfluous. The Tories, as a body, regarded Addison with no unkind feelings. Nor was it for their interest, professing, as they did, profound reverence for law and prescription, and abhorrence both of popular insurrections and of standing armies, to appropriate to themselves reflections thrown on the great military chief and demagogue who, with the support of the legions and of the common people, subverted all the ancient institutions of his country. Accordingly, every shout that was raised by the members of the Kit-Cat was echoed by the High Churchmen of the October; and

the curtain at length fell amidst thunders of unanimous applause.

The delight and admiration of the town were described by the *Guardian* in terms which we might attribute to partiality, were it not that the *Examiner*, the organ of the ministry, held similar language. The Tories, indeed, found much to sneer at in the conduct of their opponents. Steele had on this, as on other occasions, shown more zeal than taste or judgment. The honest citizens who marched under the orders of Sir Gibby, as he was facetiously called, probably knew better when to buy and when to sell stock than when to clap and when to hiss at a play, and incurred some ridicule by making the hypocritical Sempronius their favorite, and by giving to his insincere rants louder plaudits than they bestowed on the temperate eloquence of Cato. Wharton, too, who had the incredible effrontery to applaud the lines about flying from prosperous vice and from the power of impious men to a private station, did not escape the sarcasms of those who justly thought that he could fly from nothing more vicious or impious than himself. The epilogue, which was written by Garth, a zealous Whig, was severely and not unreasonably censured as ignoble and out of place. But Addison was described, even by the bitterest Tory writers, as a gentleman of wit and virtue, in whose friendship many persons of both parties were happy, and whose name ought not to be mixed up with factious squabbles.

Of the jests by which the triumph of the Whig party was disturbed, the most severe and happy was Bolingbroke's. Between two acts he sent for Booth to his box, and presented him, before the whole theater, with a purse of fifty guineas for defending the cause of liberty so well against a perpetual Dictator. This was a pungent allu-

sion to the attempt which Marlborough had made, not long before his fall, to obtain a patent creating him Captain-General for life.

It was April; and in April a hundred and thirty years ago the London season was thought to be far advanced. During a whole month, however, 'Cato' was performed to overflowing houses, and brought into the treasury of the theater twice the gains of an ordinary spring. In the summer the Drury Lane Company went down to act at Oxford, and there, before an audience which retained an affectionate remembrance of Addison's accomplishments and virtues, his tragedy was acted during several days. The gownsmen began to besiege the theater in the forenoon, and by one in the afternoon all the seats were filled.

About the merits of the piece which had so extraordinary an effect, the public, we suppose, has made up its mind. To compare it with the masterpieces of the Attic stage, with the great English dramas of the time of Elizabeth, or even with the productions of Schiller's manhood, would be absurd indeed. Yet it contains excellent dialogue and declamation, and, among plays fashioned on the French model, must be allowed to rank high; not indeed with 'Athalie' or 'Saul'; but, we think, not below 'Cinna,' and certainly above any other English tragedy of the same school; above many of the plays of Corneille; above many of the plays of Voltaire and Alfieri; and above some plays of Racine. Be this as it may, we have little doubt that 'Cato' did as much as the *Tatlers*, *Spectators*, and *Freeholders* united, to raise Addison's fame among his contemporaries.

The modesty and good nature of the successful dramatist had tamed even the malignity of faction. But literary envy, it should seem, is a fiercer passion than

party spirit. It was by a zealous Whig that the fiercest attack on the Whig tragedy was made. John Dennis published 'Remarks on Cato,' which were written with some acuteness and with much coarseness and asperity. Addison neither defended himself nor retaliated. On many points he had an excellent defense, and nothing would have been easier than to retaliate; for Dennis had written bad odes, bad tragedies, bad comedies; he had, moreover, a larger share than most men of those infirmities and eccentricities which excite laughter; and Addison's power of turning either an absurd book or an absurd man into ridicule was unrivaled. Addison, however, serenely conscious of his superiority, looked with pity on his assailant, whose temper, naturally irritable and gloomy, had been soured by want, by controversy, and by literary failures.

But among the young candidates for Addison's favor there was one distinguished by talents from the rest, and distinguished, we fear, not less by malignity and insincerity. Pope was only twenty-five. But his powers had expanded to their full maturity; and his best poem, the 'Rape of the Lock,' had recently been published. Of his genius Addison had always expressed high admiration. But Addison had early discerned, what might, indeed, have been discerned by an eye less penetrating than his, that the diminutive, crooked, sickly boy was eager to revenge himself on society for the unkindness of nature. In the *Spectator* the 'Essay on Criticism' had been praised with cordial warmth; but a gentle hint had been added that the writer of so excellent a poem would have done well to avoid ill-natured personalities. Pope, though evidently more galled by the censure than gratified by the praise, returned thanks for the admonition, and promised to profit by it. The two writers continued

to exchange civilities, counsel, and small good offices. Addison publicly extolled Pope's miscellaneous pieces, and Pope furnished Addison with a prologue. This did not last long. Pope hated Dennis, whom he had injured without provocation. The appearance of the 'Remarks on Cato' gave the irritable poet an opportunity of venting his malice under the show of friendship; and such an opportunity could not but be welcome to a nature which was implacable in enmity, and which always preferred the tortuous to the straight path. He published, accordingly, the 'Narrative of the Frenzy of John Dennis.' But Pope had mistaken his powers. He was a great master of invective and sarcasm; he could dissect a character in terse and sonorous couplets, brilliant with antithesis; but of dramatic talent he was altogether destitute. If he had written a lampoon on Dennis, such as that on Atticus or that on Sporus, the old grumbler would have been crushed. But Pope writing dialogue resembled — to borrow Horace's imagery and his own — a wolf which, instead of biting, should take to kicking, or a monkey which should try to sting. The Narrative is utterly contemptible. Of argument there is not even the show; and the jests are such as, if they were introduced into a farce, would call forth the hisses of the shilling gallery. Dennis raves about the drama, and the nurse thinks that he is calling for a dram. "There is," he cries, "no peripetia in the tragedy, no change of fortune, no change at all." — "Pray, good sir, be not angry," says the old woman; "I 'll fetch change." This is not exactly the pleasantry of Addison.

There can be no doubt that Addison saw through this officious zeal, and felt himself deeply aggrieved by it. So foolish and spiteful a pamphlet could do him no good, and, if he were thought to have any hand in it, must do him harm. Gifted with incomparable powers of ridicule,

he had never, even in self-defense, used those powers inhumanly or uncourteously; and he was not disposed to let others make his fame and his interests a pretext under which they might commit outrages from which he had himself constantly abstained. He accordingly declared that he had no concern in the Narrative, that he disapproved of it, and that if he answered the Remarks, he would answer them like a gentleman; and he took care to communicate this to Dennis. Pope was bitterly mortified; and to this transaction we are inclined to ascribe the hatred with which he ever after regarded Addison.

In September, 1713, the *Guardian* ceased to appear. Steele had gone mad about politics. A general election had just taken place; he had been chosen member for Stockbridge, and he fully expected to play a first part in Parliament. The immense success of the *Tatler* and *Spectator* had turned his head. He had been the editor of both those papers, and was not aware how entirely they owed their influence and popularity to the genius of his friend. His spirits, always violent, were now excited by vanity, ambition, and faction to such a pitch that he every day committed some offense against good sense and good taste. All the discreet and moderate members of his own party regretted and condemned his folly. "I am in a thousand troubles," Addison wrote, "about poor Dick, and wish that his zeal for the public may not be ruinous to himself. But he has sent me word that he is determined to go on, and that any advice I may give him in this particular will have no weight with him."

Steele set up a political paper called the *Englishman*, which, as it was not supported by contributions from Addison, completely failed. By this work, by some other writings of the same kind, and by the airs which he gave himself at the first meeting of the new Parliament, he

made the Tories so angry that they determined to expel him. The Whigs stood by him gallantly, but were unable to save him. The vote of expulsion was regarded by all dispassionate men as a tyrannical exercise of the power of the majority. But Steele's violence and folly, though they by no means justified the steps which his enemies took, had completely disgusted his friends; nor did he ever regain the place which he had held in the public estimation.

Addison about this time conceived the design of adding an eighth volume to the *Spectator*. In June, 1714, the first number of the new series appeared, and during about six months three papers were published weekly. Nothing can be more striking than the contrast between the *Englishman* and the eighth volume of the *Spectator*, — between Steele without Addison and Addison without Steele. The *Englishman* is forgotten; the eighth volume of the *Spectator* contains perhaps the finest essays, both serious and playful, in the English language.

Before this volume was completed, the death of Anne produced an entire change in the administration of public affairs. The blow fell suddenly. It found the Tory party distracted by internal feuds, and unprepared for any great effort. Harley had just been disgraced. Bolingbroke, it was supposed, would be the chief minister. But the Queen was on her deathbed before the white staff had been given, and her last public act was to deliver it with a feeble hand to the Duke of Shrewsbury. The emergency produced a coalition between all sections of public men who were attached to the Protestant succession. George the First was proclaimed without opposition. A council, in which the leading Whigs had seats, took the direction of affairs till the new King should arrive. The first act of the Lords Justices was to appoint Addison their Secretary.

There is an idle tradition that he was directed to prepare a letter to the King, that he could not satisfy himself as to the style of this composition, and that the Lords Justices called in a clerk, who at once did what was wanted. It is not strange that a story so flattering to mediocrity should be popular; and we are sorry to deprive dunces of their consolation. But the truth must be told. It was well observed by Sir James Mackintosh, whose knowledge of these times was unequaled, that Addison never, in any official document, affected wit or eloquence, and that his despatches are, without exception, remarkable for unpretending simplicity. Everybody who knows with what ease Addison's finest essays were produced must be convinced that, if well-turned phrases had been wanted, he would have had no difficulty in finding them. We are, however, inclined to believe that the story is not absolutely without a foundation. It may well be that Addison did not know, till he had consulted experienced clerks who remembered the times when William the Third was absent on the Continent, in what form a letter from the Council of Regency to the King ought to be drawn. We think it very likely that the ablest statesmen of our time — Lord John Russell, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Palmerston, for example — would, in similar circumstances, be found quite as ignorant. Every office has some little mysteries which the dullest man may learn with a little attention, and which the greatest man cannot possibly know by intuition. One paper must be signed by the chief of the department; another by his deputy; to a third the royal sign-manual is necessary. One communication is to be registered, and another is not. One sentence must be in black ink, and another in red ink. If the ablest Secretary for Ireland were moved to the India Board, if the ablest President of the India Board

were moved to the War Office, he would require instruction on points like these; and we do not doubt that Addison required such instruction when he became, for the first time, Secretary to the Lords Justices.

George the First took possession of his kingdom without opposition. A new ministry was formed, and a new Parliament favorable to the Whigs chosen. Sunderland was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and Addison again went to Dublin as Chief Secretary.

At Dublin Swift resided; and there was much speculation about the way in which the Dean and the Secretary would behave towards each other. The relations which existed between these remarkable men form an interesting and pleasing portion of literary history. They had early attached themselves to the same political party and to the same patrons. While Anne's Whig ministry was in power, the visits of Swift to London and the official residence of Addison in Ireland had given them opportunities of knowing each other. They were the two shrewdest observers of their age. But their observations on each other had led them to favorable conclusions. Swift did full justice to the rare powers of conversation which were latent under the bashful deportment of Addison. Addison, on the other hand, discerned much good nature under the severe look and manner of Swift; and, indeed, the Swift of 1708 and the Swift of 1738 were two very different men.

But the paths of the two friends diverged widely. The Whig statesmen loaded Addison with solid benefits. They praised Swift, asked him to dinner, and did nothing more for him. His profession laid them under a difficulty. In the State they could not promote him; and they had reason to fear that, by bestowing preferment in the Church on the author of the 'Tale of a Tub,' they might give

scandal to the public, which had no high opinion of their orthodoxy. He did not make fair allowance for the difficulties which prevented Halifax and Somers from serving him, thought himself an ill-used man, sacrificed honor and consistency to revenge, joined the Tories, and became their most formidable champion. He soon found, however, that his old friends were less to blame than he had supposed. The dislike with which the Queen and the heads of the Church regarded him was insurmountable; and it was with the greatest difficulty that he obtained an ecclesiastical dignity of no great value, on condition of fixing his residence in a country which he detested.

Difference of political opinion had produced, not indeed a quarrel, but a coolness between Swift and Addison. They at length ceased altogether to see each other. Yet there was between them a tacit compact like that between the hereditary guests in the Iliad: —

> Ἔγχεα δ' ἀλλήλων ἀλεώμεθα καὶ δι' ὁμίλου·
> Πολλοί μὲν γὰρ ἐμοὶ Τρῶες κλειτοί τ' ἐπίκουροι,
> Κτείνειν, ὃν κε θεὸς γε πόρῃ καὶ ποσσὶ κιχείω,
> Πολλοὶ δ' αὖ σοὶ Ἀχαιοὶ ἐναιρέμεν, ὃν κε δύνηαι.

It is not strange that Addison, who calumniated and insulted nobody, should not have calumniated or insulted Swift. But it is remarkable that Swift, to whom neither genius nor virtue was sacred, and who generally seemed to find, like most other renegades, a peculiar pleasure in attacking old friends, should have shown so much respect and tenderness to Addison.

Fortune had now changed. The accession of the House of Hanover had secured in England the liberties of the people, and in Ireland the dominion of the Protestant caste. To that caste Swift was more odious than any other man. He was hooted and even pelted in the

streets of Dublin; and could not venture to ride along the strand for his health without the attendance of armed servants. Many whom he had formerly served now libeled and insulted him. At this time Addison arrived. He had been advised not to show the smallest civility to the Dean of St. Patrick's. He had answered, with admirable spirit, that it might be necessary for men whose fidelity to their party was suspected to hold no intercourse with political opponents; but that one who had been a steady Whig in the worst times might venture, when the good cause was triumphant, to shake hands with an old friend who was one of the vanquished Tories. His kindness was soothing to the proud and cruelly wounded spirit of Swift; and the two great satirists resumed their habits of friendly intercourse.

Those associates of Addison whose political opinions agreed with his shared his good fortune. He took Tickell with him to Ireland. He procured for Budgell a lucrative place in the same kingdom. Ambrose Philips was provided for in England. Steele had injured himself so much by his eccentricity and perverseness that he obtained but a very small part of what he thought his due. He was, however, knighted; he had a place in the household; and he subsequently received other marks of favor from the court.

Addison did not remain long in Ireland. In 1715 he quitted his secretaryship for a seat at the Board of Trade. In the same year his comedy of the 'Drummer' was brought on the stage. The name of the author was not announced; the piece was coldly received; and some critics have expressed a doubt whether it were really Addison's. To us the evidence, both external and internal, seems decisive. It is not in Addison's best manner; but it contains numerous passages which no other writer known

to us could have produced. It was again performed after Addison's death, and, being known to be his, was loudly applauded.

Towards the close of the year 1715, while the rebellion was still raging in Scotland, Addison published the first number of a paper called the *Freeholder*. Among his political works the *Freeholder* is entitled to the first place. Even in the *Spectator* there are few serious papers nobler than the character of his friend Lord Somers, and certainly no satirical papers superior to those in which the Tory fox-hunter is introduced. This character is the original of Squire Western, and is drawn with all Fielding's force, and with a delicacy of which Fielding was altogether destitute. As none of Addison's works exhibit stronger marks of his genius than the *Freeholder*, so none does more honor to his moral character. It is difficult to extol too highly the candor and humanity of a political writer whom even the excitement of civil war cannot hurry into unseemly violence. Oxford, it is well known, was then the stronghold of Toryism. The High Street had been repeatedly lined with bayonets in order to keep down the disaffected gownsmen ; and traitors pursued by the messengers of the government had been concealed in the garrets of several colleges. Yet the admonition which, even under such circumstances, Addison addressed to the university, is singularly gentle, respectful, and even affectionate. Indeed, he could not find it in his heart to deal harshly even with imaginary persons. His fox-hunter, though ignorant, stupid, and violent, is at heart a good fellow, and is at last reclaimed by the clemency of the King. Steele was dissatisfied with his friend's moderation, and, though he acknowledged that the *Freeholder* was excellently written, complained that the ministry played on a lute when it was necessary to blow the

trumpet. He accordingly determined to execute a flourish after his own fashion, and tried to rouse the public spirit of the nation by means of a paper called the *Town Talk*, which is now as utterly forgotten as his *Englishman*, as his 'Crisis,' as his 'Letter to the Bailiff of Stockbridge,' as his *Reader*, — in short, as everything that he wrote without the help of Addison.

In the same year in which the 'Drummer' was acted, and in which the first numbers of the *Freeholder* appeared, the estrangement of Pope and Addison became complete. Addison had from the first seen that Pope was false and malevolent. Pope had discovered that Addison was jealous. The discovery was made in a strange manner. Pope had written the 'Rape of the Lock,' in two cantos, without supernatural machinery. These two cantos had been loudly applauded, and by none more loudly than by Addison. Then Pope thought of the Sylphs and Gnomes, — Ariel, Momentilla, Crispissa, and Umbriel, — and resolved to interweave the Rosicrucian mythology with the original fabric. He asked Addison's advice. Addison said that the poem as it stood was a delicious little thing, and entreated Pope not to run the risk of marring what was so excellent in trying to mend it. Pope afterwards declared that this insidious counsel first opened his eyes to the baseness of him who gave it.

Now there can be no doubt that Pope's plan was most ingenious, and that he afterwards executed it with great skill and success. But does it necessarily follow that Addison's advice was bad? And if Addison's advice was bad, does it necessarily follow that it was given from bad motives? If a friend were to ask us whether we would advise him to risk his all in a lottery of which the chances were ten to one against him, we should do our best to dissuade him from running such a risk. Even if he were

so lucky as to get the thirty thousand pound prize, we should not admit that we had counseled him ill; and we should certainly think it the height of injustice in him to accuse us of having been actuated by malice. We think Addison's advice good advice. It rested on a sound principle, the result of long and wide experience. The general rule undoubtedly is that, when a successful work of imagination has been produced, it should not be recast. We cannot at this moment call to mind a single instance in which this rule has been transgressed with happy effect, except the instance of the 'Rape of the Lock.' Tasso recast his 'Jerusalem.' Akenside recast his 'Pleasures of the Imagination' and his 'Epistle to Curio.' Pope himself, emboldened no doubt by the success with which he had expanded and remodeled the 'Rape of the Lock,' made the same experiment on the 'Dunciad.' All these attempts failed. Who was to foresee that Pope would, once in his life, be able to do what he could not himself do twice, and what nobody else has ever done?

Addison's advice was good. But had it been bad, why should we pronounce it dishonest? Scott tells us that one of his best friends predicted the failure of Waverley. Herder adjured Goethe not to take so unpromising a subject as Faust. Hume tried to dissuade Robertson from writing the 'History of Charles the Fifth.' Nay, Pope himself was one of those who prophesied that 'Cato' would never succeed on the stage, and advised Addison to print it without risking a representation. But Scott, Goethe, Robertson, Addison had the good sense and generosity to give their advisers credit for the best intentions. Pope's heart was not of the same kind with theirs.

In 1715, while he was engaged in translating the Iliad, he met Addison at a coffee-house. Philips and Budgell

were there; but their sovereign got rid of them, and asked Pope to dine with him alone. After dinner, Addison said that he lay under a difficulty which he wished to explain. "Tickell," he said, "translated some time ago the first book of the Iliad. I have promised to look it over and correct it. I cannot, therefore, ask to see yours; for that would be double-dealing." Pope made a civil reply, and begged that his second book might have the advantage of Addison's revision. Addison readily agreed, looked over the second book, and sent it back with warm commendations.

Tickell's version of the first book appeared soon after this conversation. In the preface, all rivalry was earnestly disclaimed. Tickell declared that he should not go on with the Iliad. That enterprise he should leave to powers which he admitted to be superior to his own. His only view, he said, in publishing this specimen was to bespeak the favor of the public to a translation of the Odyssey, in which he had made some progress.

Addison, and Addison's devoted followers, pronounced both the versions good, but maintained that Tickell's had more of the original. The town gave a decided preference to Pope's. We do not think it worth while to settle such a question of precedence. Neither of the rivals can be said to have translated the Iliad, unless, indeed, the word translation be used in the sense which it bears in the 'Midsummer Night's Dream.' When Bottom makes his appearance with an ass's head instead of his own, Peter Quince exclaims, "Bless thee! Bottom, bless thee! thou art translated." In this sense, undoubtedly, the readers of either Pope or Tickell may very properly exclaim, "Bless thee, Homer! thou art translated indeed."

Our readers will, we hope, agree with us in thinking that no man in Addison's situation could have acted

more fairly and kindly, both towards Pope and towards Tickell, than he appears to have done. But an odious suspicion had sprung up in the mind of Pope. He fancied, and he soon firmly believed, that there was a deep conspiracy against his fame and his fortunes. The work on which he had staked his reputation was to be depreciated. The subscription on which rested his hopes of a competence was to be defeated. With this view Addison had made a rival translation; Tickell had consented to father it; and the wits of Button's had united to puff it.

Is there any external evidence to support this grave accusation? The answer is short. There is absolutely none.

Was there any internal evidence which proved Addison to be the author of this version? Was it a work which Tickell was incapable of producing? Surely not. Tickell was a fellow of a college at Oxford, and must be supposed to have been able to construe the Iliad; and he was a better versifier than his friend. We are not aware that Pope pretended to have discovered any turns of expression peculiar to Addison. Had such turns of expression been discovered, they would be sufficiently accounted for by supposing Addison to have corrected his friend's lines, as he owned that he had done.

Is there anything in the character of the accused persons which makes the accusation probable? We answer confidently — nothing. Tickell was long after this time described by Pope himself as a very fair and worthy man. Addison had been, during many years, before the public. Literary rivals, political opponents, had kept their eyes on him. But neither envy nor faction, in its utmost rage, had ever imputed to him a single deviation from the laws of honor and of social morality. Had he been

indeed a man meanly jealous of fame, and capable of stooping to base and wicked acts for the purpose of injuring his competitors, would his vices have remained latent so long? He was a writer of tragedy: had he ever injured Rowe? He was a writer of comedy: had he not done ample justice to Congreve, and given valuable help to Steele? He was a pamphleteer: have not his good nature and generosity been acknowledged by Swift, his rival in fame and his adversary in politics?

That Tickell should have been guilty of a villainy seems to us highly improbable. That Addison should have been guilty of a villainy seems to us highly improbable. But that these two men should have conspired together to commit a villainy seems to us improbable in a tenfold degree. All that is known to us of their intercourse tends to prove that it was not the intercourse of two accomplices in crime. These are some of the lines in which Tickell poured forth his sorrow over the coffin of Addison: —

> "Or dost thou warn poor mortals left behind,
> A task well suited to thy gentle mind?
> Oh, if sometimes thy spotless form descend,
> To me thine aid, thou guardian genius, lend.
> When rage misguides me, or when fear alarms,
> When pain distresses, or when pleasure charms,
> In silent whisperings purer thoughts impart,
> And turn from ill a frail and feeble heart;
> Lead through the paths thy virtue trod before,
> Till bliss shall join, nor death can part us more."

In what words, we should like to know, did this guardian genius invite his pupil to join in a plan such as the editor of the *Satirist* would hardly dare to propose to the editor of the *Age*?

We do not accuse Pope of bringing an accusation which he knew to be false. We have not the smallest doubt

that he believed it to be true; and the evidence on which he believed it he found in his own bad heart. His own life was one long series of tricks, as mean and as malicious as that of which he suspected Addison and Tickell. He was all stiletto and mask. To injure, to insult, and to save himself from the consequences of injury and insult by lying and equivocating, was the habit of his life. He published a lampoon on the Duke of Chandos; he was taxed with it; and he lied and equivocated. He published a lampoon on Aaron Hill; he was taxed with it; and he lied and equivocated. He published a still fouler lampoon on Lady Mary Wortley Montagu; he was taxed with it; and he lied with more than usual effrontery and vehemence. He puffed himself and abused his enemies under feigned names. He robbed himself of his own letters, and then raised the hue and cry after them. Besides his frauds of malignity, of fear, of interest, and of vanity, there were frauds which he seems to have committed from love of fraud alone. He had a habit of stratagem, a pleasure in outwitting all who came near him. Whatever his object might be, the indirect road to it was that which he preferred. For Bolingbroke Pope undoubtedly felt as much love and veneration as it was in his nature to feel for any human being. Yet Pope was scarcely dead when it was discovered that, from no motive except the mere love of artifice, he had been guilty of an act of gross perfidy to Bolingbroke.

Nothing was more natural than that such a man as this should attribute to others that which he felt within himself. A plain, probable, coherent explanation is frankly given to him. He is certain that it is all a romance. A line of conduct scrupulously fair, and even friendly, is pursued towards him. He is convinced that it is merely a cover for a vile intrigue by which he is to be

disgraced and ruined. It is vain to ask him for proofs. He has none, and wants none, except those which he carries in his own bosom.

Whether Pope's malignity at length provoked Addison to retaliate for the first and last time cannot now be known with certainty. We have only Pope's story, which runs thus. A pamphlet appeared containing some reflections which stung Pope to the quick. What those reflections were, and whether they were reflections of which he had a right to complain, we have now no means of deciding. The Earl of Warwick, a foolish and vicious lad, who regarded Addison with the feelings with which such lads generally regard their best friends, told Pope, truly or falsely, that this pamphlet had been written by Addison's direction. When we consider what a tendency stories have to grow, in passing even from one honest man to another honest man, and when we consider that to the name of honest man neither Pope nor the Earl of Warwick had a claim, we are not disposed to attach much importance to this anecdote.

It is certain, however, that Pope was furious. He had already sketched the character of Atticus in prose. In his anger he turned this prose into the brilliant and energetic lines which everybody knows by heart, or ought to know by heart, and sent them to Addison. One charge which Pope has enforced with great skill is probably not without foundation. Addison was, we are inclined to believe, too fond of presiding over a circle of humble friends. Of the other imputations which these famous lines are intended to convey, scarcely one has ever been proved to be just, and some are certainly false. That Addison was not in the habit of "damning with faint praise" appears from innumerable passages in his writings, and from none more than from those in which he

mentions Pope. And it is not merely unjust, but ridiculous, to describe a man who made the fortune of almost every one of his intimate friends as "so obliging that he ne'er obliged."

That Addison felt the sting of Pope's satire keenly we cannot doubt. That he was conscious of one of the weaknesses with which he was reproached is highly probable. But his heart, we firmly believe, acquitted him of the gravest part of the accusation. He acted like himself. As a satirist he was, at his own weapons, more than Pope's match; and he would have been at no loss for topics. A distorted and diseased body, tenanted by a yet more distorted and diseased mind; spite and envy thinly disguised by sentiments as benevolent and noble as those which Sir Peter Teazle admired in Mr. Joseph Surface; a feeble, sickly licentiousness; an odious love of filthy and noisome images; — these were things which a genius less powerful than that to which we owe the *Spectator* could easily have held up to the mirth and hatred of mankind. Addison had, moreover, at his command other means of vengeance which a bad man would not have scrupled to use. He was powerful in the State. Pope was a Catholic; and in those times, a minister would have found it easy to harass the most innocent Catholic by innumerable petty vexations. Pope, near twenty years later, said that "through the lenity of the government alone he could live with comfort." "Consider," he exclaimed, "the injury that a man of high rank and credit may do to a private person, under penal laws and many other disadvantages." It is pleasing to reflect that the only revenge which Addison took was to insert in the *Freeholder* a warm encomium on the translation of the Iliad, and to exhort all lovers of learning to put down their names as subscribers. There could be no doubt, he said, from the

specimens already published, that the masterly hand of Pope would do as much for Homer as Dryden had done for Virgil. From that time to the end of his life, he always treated Pope, by Pope's own acknowledgment, with justice. Friendship was, of course, at an end.

One reason which induced the Earl of Warwick to play the ignominious part of talebearer on this occasion may have been his dislike of the marriage which was about to take place between his mother and Addison. The Countess Dowager, a daughter of the old and honorable family of the Middletons of Chirk, — a family which, in any country but ours, would be called noble, — resided at Holland House. Addison had, during some years, occupied at Chelsea a small dwelling, once the abode of Nell Gwynn. Chelsea is now a district of London, and Holland House may be called a town residence. But in the days of Anne and George the First, milkmaids and sportsmen wandered between green hedges and over fields bright with daisies, from Kensington almost to the shore of the Thames. Addison and Lady Warwick were country neighbors, and became intimate friends. The great wit and scholar tried to allure the young lord from the fashionable amusements of beating watchmen, breaking windows, and rolling women in hogsheads down Holborn Hill, to the study of letters and the practice of virtue. These well-meant exertions did little good, however, either to the disciple or to the master. Lord Warwick grew up a rake; and Addison fell in love. The mature beauty of the Countess has been celebrated by poets in language which, after a very large allowance has been made for flattery, would lead us to believe that she was a fine woman; and her rank doubtless heightened her attractions. The courtship was long. The hopes of the lover appear to have risen and fallen with the fortunes of

his party. His attachment was at length matter of such notoriety that, when he visited Ireland for the last time, Rowe addressed some consolatory verses to the Chloe of Holland House. It strikes us as a little strange that, in these verses, Addison should be called Lycidas, a name of singularly evil omen for a swain just about to cross St. George's Channel.

At length Chloe capitulated. Addison was indeed able to treat with her on equal terms. He had reason to expect preferment even higher than that which he had attained. He had inherited the fortune of a brother who died Governor of Madras. He had purchased an estate in Warwickshire, and had been welcomed to his domain in very tolerable verse by one of the neighboring squires, the poetical fox-hunter, William Somervile. In August, 1716, the newspapers announced that Joseph Addison, Esquire, famous for many excellent works, both in verse and prose, had espoused the Countess Dowager of Warwick.

He now fixed his abode at Holland House, — a house which can boast of a greater number of inmates distinguished in political and literary history than any other private dwelling in England. His portrait still hangs there. The features are pleasing; the complexion is remarkably fair; but in the expression we trace rather the gentleness of his disposition than the force and keenness of his intellect.

Not long after his marriage he reached the height of civil greatness. The Whig Government had, during some time, been torn by internal dissensions. Lord Townshend led one section of the Cabinet, Lord Sunderland the other. At length, in the spring of 1717, Sunderland triumphed. Townshend retired from office, and was accompanied by Walpole and Cowper. Sunderland proceeded to recon-

struct the Ministry; and Addison was appointed Secretary of State. It is certain that the seals were pressed upon him, and were at first declined by him. Men equally versed in official business might easily have been found; and his colleagues knew that they could not expect assistance from him in debate. He owed his elevation to his popularity, to his stainless probity, and to his literary fame.

But scarcely had Addison entered the Cabinet when his health began to fail. From one serious attack he recovered in the autumn; and his recovery was celebrated in Latin verses, worthy of his own pen, by Vincent Bourne, who was then at Trinity College, Cambridge. A relapse soon took place; and in the following spring, Addison was prevented by a severe asthma from discharging the duties of his post. He resigned it, and was succeeded by his friend Craggs, a young man whose natural parts, though little improved by cultivation, were quick and showy, whose graceful person and winning manners had made him generally acceptable in society, and who, if he had lived, would probably have been the most formidable of all the rivals of Walpole.

As yet there was no Joseph Hume. The ministers, therefore, were able to bestow on Addison a retiring pension of fifteen hundred pounds a year. In what form this pension was given we are not told by the biographers, and have not time to inquire. But it is certain that Addison did not vacate his seat in the House of Commons.

Rest of mind and body seems to have reëstablished his health; and he thanked God, with cheerful piety, for having set him free both from his office and from his asthma. Many years seemed to be before him, and he meditated many works, — a tragedy on the death of Socrates, a trans-

lation of the Psalms, a treatise on the evidences of Christianity. Of this last performance a part, which we could well spare, has come down to us.

But the fatal complaint soon returned, and gradually prevailed against all the resources of medicine. It is melancholy to think that the last months of such a life should have been overclouded both by domestic and by political vexations. A tradition which began early, which has been generally received, and to which we have nothing to oppose, has represented his wife as an arrogant and imperious woman. It is said that, till his health failed him, he was glad to escape from the Countess Dowager and her magnificent dining-room, blazing with the gilded devices of the House of Rich, to some tavern where he could enjoy a laugh, a talk about Virgil and Boileau, and a bottle of claret with the friends of his happier days. All those friends, however, were not left to him. Sir Richard Steele had been gradually estranged by various causes. He considered himself as one who, in evil times, had braved martyrdom for his political principles, and demanded, when the Whig party was triumphant, a large compensation for what he had suffered when it was militant. The Whig leaders took a very different view of his claims. They thought that he had, by his own petulance and folly, brought them as well as himself into trouble, and, though they did not absolutely neglect him, doled out favors to him with a sparing hand. It was natural that he should be angry with them, and especially angry with Addison. But what above all seems to have disturbed Sir Richard was the elevation of Tickell, who, at thirty, was made by Addison Undersecretary of State, while the editor of the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, the author of the 'Crisis,' the member for Stockbridge who had been persecuted for firm adherence to the House of Hanover,

was, at near fifty, forced, after many solicitations and complaints, to content himself with a share in the patent of Drury Lane Theater. Steele himself says, in his celebrated letter to Congreve, that Addison, by his preference of Tickell, "incurred the warmest resentment of other gentlemen"; and everything seems to indicate that of those resentful gentlemen Steele was himself one.

While poor Sir Richard was brooding over what he considered as Addison's unkindness, a new cause of quarrel arose. The Whig party, already divided against itself, was rent by a new schism. The celebrated bill for limiting the number of peers had been brought in. The proud Duke of Somerset, first in rank of all the nobles whose religion permitted them to sit in Parliament, was the ostensible author of the measure. But it was supported, and, in truth, devised by the Prime Minister.

We are satisfied that the bill was most pernicious; and we fear that the motives which induced Sunderland to frame it were not honorable to him. But we cannot deny that it was supported by many of the best and wisest men of that age. Nor was this strange. The royal prerogative had, within the memory of the generation then in the vigor of life, been so grossly abused that it was still regarded with a jealousy which, when the peculiar situation of the House of Brunswick is considered, may perhaps be called immoderate. The particular prerogative of creating peers had, in the opinion of the Whigs, been grossly abused by Queen Anne's last Ministry; and even the Tories admitted that her Majesty, in swamping, as it has since been called, the Upper House, had done what only an extreme case could justify. The theory of the English constitution, according to many high authorities, was that three independent powers, the sovereign, the nobility, and the commons,

ought constantly to act as checks on each other. If this theory were sound, it seemed to follow that to put one of these powers under the absolute control of the other two was absurd. But if the number of peers were unlimited, it could not well be denied that the Upper House was under the absolute control of the Crown and the Commons, and was indebted only to their moderation for any power which it might be suffered to retain.

Steele took part with the Opposition, Addison with the ministers. Steele, in a paper called the *Plebeian*, vehemently attacked the bill. Sunderland called for help on Addison, and Addison obeyed the call. In a paper called the *Old Whig* he answered, and indeed refuted, Steele's arguments. It seems to us that the premises of both the controversialists were unsound; that, on those premises, Addison reasoned well and Steele ill, and that consequently Addison brought out a false conclusion, while Steele blundered upon the truth. In style, in wit, and in politeness, Addison maintained his superiority, though the *Old Whig* is by no means one of his happiest performances.

At first, both the anonymous opponents observed the laws of propriety. But at length Steele so far forgot himself as to throw an odious imputation on the morals of the chiefs of the administration. Addison replied with severity, but, in our opinion, with less severity than was due to so grave an offense against morality and decorum; nor did he, in his just anger, forget for a moment the laws of good taste and good breeding. One calumny which has been often repeated, and never yet contradicted, it is our duty to expose. It is asserted in the 'Biographia Britannica' that Addison designated Steele as "little Dicky." This assertion was repeated by Johnson, who had never seen the *Old Whig*, and was

therefore excusable. It has also been repeated by Miss Aikin, who has seen the *Old Whig*, and for whom therefore there is less excuse. Now, it is true that the words "little Dicky" occur in the *Old Whig*, and that Steele's name was Richard. It is equally true that the words "little Isaac" occur in the 'Duenna,' and that Newton's name was Isaac. But we confidently affirm that Addison's little Dicky had no more to do with Steele than Sheridan's little Isaac with Newton. If we apply the words "little Dicky" to Steele, we deprive a very lively and ingenious passage, not only of all its wit, but of all its meaning. Little Dicky was the nickname of Henry Norris, an actor of remarkably small stature, but of great humor, who played the usurer Gomez, then a most popular part, in Dryden's 'Spanish Friar.'

The merited reproof which Steele had received, though softened by some kind and courteous expressions, galled him bitterly. He replied with little force and great acrimony; but no rejoinder appeared. Addison was fast hastening to his grave; and had, we may well suppose, little disposition to prosecute a quarrel with an old friend. His complaint had terminated in dropsy. He bore up long and manfully. But at length he abandoned all hope, dismissed his physicians, and calmly prepared himself to die.

His works he intrusted to the care of Tickell, and dedicated them a very few days before his death to Craggs, in a letter written with the sweet and graceful eloquence of a Saturday's *Spectator*. In this, his last composition, he alluded to his approaching end in words so manly, so cheerful, and so tender that it is difficult to read them without tears. At the same time he earnestly recommended the interests of Tickell to the care of Craggs.

Within a few hours of the time at which this dedica-

tion was written, Addison sent to beg Gay, who was then living by his wits about town, to come to Holland House. Gay went, and was received with great kindness. To his amazement his forgiveness was implored by the dying man. Poor Gay, the most good-natured and simple of mankind, could not imagine what he had to forgive. There was, however, some wrong, the remembrance of which weighed on Addison's mind, and which he declared himself anxious to repair. He was in a state of extreme exhaustion; and the parting was doubtless a friendly one on both sides. Gay supposed that some plan to serve him had been in agitation at Court, and had been frustrated by Addison's influence. Nor is this improbable. Gay had paid assiduous court to the royal family. But in the Queen's days he had been the eulogist of Bolingbroke, and was still connected with many Tories. It is not strange that Addison, while heated by conflict, should have thought himself justified in obstructing the preferment of one whom he might regard as a political enemy. Neither is it strange that, when reviewing his whole life, and earnestly scrutinizing all his motives, he should think that he had acted an unkind and ungenerous part in using his power against a distressed man of letters, who was as harmless and as helpless as a child.

One inference may be drawn from this anecdote. It appears that Addison, on his death bed, called himself to a strict account, and was not at ease till he had asked pardon for an injury which it was not even suspected that he had committed, — for an injury which would have caused disquiet only to a very tender conscience. Is it not then reasonable to infer that, if he had really been guilty of forming a base conspiracy against the fame and fortunes of a rival, he would have expressed some remorse for so serious a crime? But it is unnecessary to

multiply arguments and evidence for the defense when there is neither argument nor evidence for the accusation.

The last moments of Addison were perfectly serene. His interview with his son-in-law is universally known. "See," he said, "how a Christian can die." The piety of Addison was, in truth, of a singularly cheerful character. The feeling which predominates in all his devotional writings is gratitude. God was to him the all-wise and all-powerful friend who had watched over his cradle with more than maternal tenderness; who had listened to his cries before they could form themselves in prayer; who had preserved his youth from the snares of vice; who had made his cup run over with worldly blessings; who had doubled the value of those blessings by bestowing a thankful heart to enjoy them, and dear friends to partake them; who had rebuked the waves of the Ligurian gulf, had purified the autumnal air of the Campagna, and had restrained the avalanches of Mont Cenis. Of the Psalms, his favorite was that which represents the Ruler of all things under the endearing image of a shepherd, whose crook guides the flock safe, through gloomy and desolate glens, to meadows well watered and rich with herbage. On that goodness to which he ascribed all the happiness of his life he relied in the hour of death with the love which casteth out fear. He died on the 17th of June, 1719. He had just entered on his forty-eighth year.

His body lay in state in the Jerusalem Chamber, and was borne thence to the Abbey at dead of night. The choir sang a funeral hymn. Bishop Atterbury, one of those Tories who had loved and honored the most accomplished of the Whigs, met the corpse, and led the procession by torchlight, round the shrine of Saint Edward and the graves of the Plantagenets, to the Chapel of Henry

the Seventh. On the north side of that chapel, in the vault of the House of Albemarle, the coffin of Addison lies next to the coffin of Montagu. Yet a few months, and the same mourners passed again along the same aisle. The same sad anthem was again chanted. The same vault was again opened; and the coffin of Craggs was placed close to the coffin of Addison.

Many tributes were paid to the memory of Addison; but one alone is now remembered. Tickell bewailed his friend in an elegy which would do honor to the greatest name in our literature, and which unites the energy and magnificence of Dryden to the tenderness and purity of Cowper. This fine poem was prefixed to a superb edition of Addison's works, which was published, in 1721, by subscription. The names of the subscribers proved how widely his fame had been spread. That his countrymen should be eager to possess his writings, even in a costly form, is not wonderful. But it is wonderful that, though English literature was then little studied on the continent, Spanish grandees, Italian prelates, marshals of France, should be found in the list. Among the most remarkable names are those of the Queen of Sweden, of Prince Eugene, of the Grand Duke of Tuscany, of the Dukes of Parma, Modena, and Guastalla, of the Doge of Genoa, of the Regent Orleans, and of Cardinal Dubois. We ought to add that this edition, though eminently beautiful, is in some important points defective; nor, indeed, do we yet possess a complete collection of Addison's writings.

It is strange that neither his opulent and noble widow nor any of his powerful and attached friends should have thought of placing even a simple tablet, inscribed with his name, on the walls of the Abbey. It was not till three generations had laughed and wept over his

pages that the omission was supplied by the public veneration. At length, in our own time, his image, skillfuliy graven, appeared in the Poet's Corner. It represents him, as we can conceive him, clad in his dressing gown and freed from his wig, stepping from his parlor at Chelsea into his trim little garden, with the account of the Everlasting Club or the Loves of Hilpa and Shalum, just finished for the next day's *Spectator*, in his hand. Such a mark of national respect was due to the unsullied statesman, to the accomplished scholar, to the master of pure English eloquence, to the consummate painter of life and manners. It was due, above all, to the great satirist, who alone knew how to use ridicule without abusing it; who, without inflicting a wound, effected a great social reform; and who reconciled wit and virtue, after a long and disastrous separation, during which wit had been led astray by profligacy, and virtue by fanaticism.

NOTES.

July, 1843. This was the date of the first publication of the Essay, which was originally a contribution to the *Edinburgh Review* under the form of a notice of *The Life of Joseph Addison*, by Lucy Aikin.

1 12. **The courteous knight.** Rogero, one of the characters in Ariosto's poetical romance, *Orlando Furioso*. Bradamante was a maiden knight, and Rogero would not use against her his customary weapon, the sword Balisarda, which was endowed with magic power.

2 4. **The Laputan flapper.** See *Gulliver's Travels*, Part III. Chap. 2.

2 6. In a letter to Napier, then editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, written during the preparation of this Essay, Macaulay had said: "I am truly vexed to find Miss Aikin's book so very bad that it is impossible for us, with due regard to our own character, to praise it. All that I can do is to speak civilly of her writings generally, and to express regret that she should have been nodding. . . . Yet it goes much against my feelings to censure any woman, even with the greatest lenity. . . . I shall not again undertake to review any lady's book till I know how it is executed."

2 14. Miss Aikin had won considerable literary reputation by the publication of Memoirs of the Courts of Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I.

2 16. **Congreve** (1670–1729) **and Prior** (1664–1721). Contemporaries of Addison; the first a brilliant and popular dramatist, the second a poet and satirist.

2 17. **Theobald's.** In Elizabeth's time the residence of her minister Cecil (Lord Burleigh).

2 18. **Steenkirks.** At the battle of Steenkirk, in 1692, the French army, under Luxemburg, was surprised and nearly defeated by the English and allied forces under William III. Many of the French noblemen, roused from their sleep by the sudden attack, hurried to their places with disordered dress, and distinguished themselves by their bravery where the fight was hottest, until William was finally

beaten back. The battle gave its name to a new fashion of arranging with studied negligence the rich lace neckcloths then in vogue, in imitation of their appearance on the battlefield.

Flowing periwigs, worn by all men of fashion at this time, and often very expensive. It is said that Steele, who lived on a scale of impecunious extravagance, could never take the air without a wig worth fifty guineas.

2 19. **Hampton.** A royal palace on the Thames, above London.

2 33. Here Macaulay enters upon the real subject of his essay, for which the nominal review of Miss Aikin's book serves only as an excuse. Such further comment upon her work as he wished to make appeared in footnotes in the *Review*, and was omitted altogether from the subsequent republications.

3 11. **Parnell,** Rev. Thomas, was one of the minor poets and critics of Queen Anne's reign. He contributed somewhat to the *Spectator*, and was on intimate terms with Pope and Swift.

3 12. **Blair,** Rev. Hugh, D.D., for many years Professor of Rhetoric and Belles-lettres at Edinburgh University. He was a friend of Samuel Johnson, and popular in his own day as an essayist and sermon writer.

A tragedy not very much better than Dr. Johnson's. Addison's *Cato* was, like Samuel Johnson's *Irene*, declamatory, undramatic, and in itself uninteresting; but unlike the latter tragedy, which was practically a failure, Addison's play achieved at the time of its production an extraordinary success. For the causes of this, and for Macaulay's criticism of the play itself, see the present Essay, pp. 67–70.

3 22. **Button's,** a coffee-house patronized by Addison and his friends.

> Public coffee-houses first appeared in London during the reign of Charles II., and in Queen Anne's time were an important element in the life of the town. They were frequented as places for social intercourse and as centers of news and gossip. Each coffee-house had its habitual patrons, drawn together by similarity of tastes or occupations. At one would be found the dandies of the day, at another the wits or scholars; here the clergymen, there the merchants and brokers. In this way they became virtually clubs. Especially was this true when, as at Button's, the reputation of the place was made by the custom of some literary celebrity or coterie.

4 15. The Episcopal form of service was displaced under Cromwell by the Presbyterian, and its public use was forbidden.

4 19. **Dunkirk,** on the Straits of Dover, had been won for England by Cromwell, and its possession was considered of great importance for naval defense from France. Its sale by Charles II., who was always in need of money, roused great indignation in England.

4 22. Charles II. married the Portuguese princess Catharine in 1662.

5 5. **The Convocation** (or assembly of the clergy) **of 1689** was summoned by King William to consider propositions intended to bring the dissenters back into the Established Church. Tillotson, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, was the leader of the movement. The High Church party held control, and the propositions were defeated.

5 11. **The Charterhouse,** an old and famous London school. In Addison's time it held with Westminster the first place among the schools of England, as Rugby, Eton, and Harrow do to-day.

5 14–16. Johnson is the authority for the barring out; see his Essay on Addison. The second tradition is related in *Addisoniana*, a collection of anecdotes with regard to Addison, as a story which had been handed down in his native town.

6 3. James II., in his effort to force the Roman Catholic faith upon England, struck at the Universities as the strongholds and nurseries of the Established Church. If education were open only to Catholics, the supply of Protestant clergymen would be cut off. Accordingly he attempted to force the fellows of Magdalen College to elect a Roman Catholic, Farmer, as their President. They refused, and elected instead Hough, one of their own number. A commission was then sent to Oxford by the King to enforce compliance with the royal will, as recounted by Macaulay in the text.

His Chancellor, Jeffreys. He had received the office as a reward for his work in the Bloody Assizes (see Gardiner's *Students' History of England*, p. 637; Green's *History of the English People*, Vol. IV. p. 9). The Lord High Chancellor was originally supposed to be the confidential adviser of the King, and hence is sometimes called 'The keeper of the King's conscience.' He is keeper of the Great Seal, the presiding officer of the House of Lords, a member of the cabinet, and supreme judge of the Court of Chancery.

6 7. In 1688 James ordered the English clergy to read before their congregations a Declaration of Indulgence to Catholics. The Archbishop of Canterbury and six bishops signed a protest against this illegal action, and for this were brought to trial by the King (see Green, IV. 23; Gardiner, p. 642).

6 10. The fellows of each college at Cambridge and Oxford constitute, with their President, the governing body of their foundation or college. They are not necessarily resident, and may hold their fellowships for many years. Addison, for example, was elected in 1698 to a fellowship which he continued to hold until 1711, though he left Oxford in 1699.

6 28. **The demies as well as the fellows had been expelled by the Commission.** The term 'demi' is peculiar to Magdalen College. It denotes a holder of an undergraduate scholarship.

7 20. **Buchanan,** George (1506–1582), a great scholar and historian, tutor for a time to both Mary Queen of Scots and her son James I of England. His Latin verses are of great excellence.

7 30–34. This must not be taken too literally. The accomplishments which Macaulay ascribes to the ordinary schoolboy are proverbial. Mr. Courthope says: "His [Addison's] acquaintance with the Greek poets, if cursory, was wide and intelligent; he was sufficiently master of the language thoroughly to understand the spirit of what he read.... The Eton or Rugby boy who, in these days, with a normal appetite for cricket and football, acquired an equal knowledge of Greek literature, would certainly be somewhat of a prodigy" (*Addison* in *English Men of Letters*).

8 23. Addison traveled abroad from 1699 to 1703, and spent over a year in Italy. In 1705 he published his *Remarks on the Several Parts of Italy*.

9 5. **Commentaries, Letters to Atticus.** Who are the authors?

9 8. **Lucan** (38–65 A.D.), the author of the epic poem *Pharsalia*, was one of the chief Roman poets of the 'silver age' in Latin literature.

9 15. The *Dialogues upon the Usefulness of Ancient Medals* was begun while Addison was abroad, but first appeared in print after his death, in the edition of his works published by Tickell in 1721.

9 28. The Essay, *Of the Christian Religion*, occupied Addison's attention at intervals during the last five years of his life, but was left unfinished. It was included in Tickell's edition just referred to.

10 1. **The Cock Lane ghost.** In 1772 a house in Cock Lane, Stockwell, near London, was reported to be haunted by a ghost which produced strange rappings. It was for a time the talk of London, but was found at last to be a hoax.

10 2. **Ireland's Vortigern.** William Henry Ireland produced in 1795, at the age of seventeen, a series of documents relating to Shakespeare which he pretended to have discovered, — private letters, theatrical memoranda, annotated books, and at last a complete play, *Vortigern*, which was actually purchased by Sheridan and acted at the Drury Lane Theater. Many eminent men of letters were at first imposed upon, but the play failed on its first performance, and Ireland was forced to confess the forgeries.

The Thundering Legion. There is a tradition that in the army of Marcus Aurelius was a legion composed entirely of Christians, and that

once, when shut in a defile by the Marcomanni, a violent thunderstorm arose in answer to their prayers, under cover of which they attacked and defeated their enemies.

10 5. According to the tradition, Abgarus, toparch of Edessa, was sick of an incurable disease. Hearing of Christ's miraculous cures, he wrote professing belief, and asking the Saviour to come and heal him. Jesus, with his own hand, wrote in reply that when he had done the command of his Father he must return to Him, but he would send one of his disciples, Thaddeus, to heal Abgarus's disease and show him the way of life.

10 16. **Boyle,** Charles (1676–1731), afterwards third Earl of Orrery, put forth in 1695, while an undergraduate at Oxford, an edition of the *Epistles of Phalaris*, which were then supposed to date from the sixth century B.C. He was largely assisted in his work by Atterbury and other Oxford colleagues. The unscholarly character of the book was exposed by Dr. Richard Bentley (1662–1742), the foremost English scholar of his time, who published, two years later, his famous *Dissertation on the Epistles of Phalaris*, proving that the *Epistles* were forgeries of the second century A.D. The controversy attracted wide attention, and called forth Swift's *Battle of the Books*.

10 17. **Blackmore,** Sir Richard (*d.* 1729), court physician to King William, and a very voluminous writer, both in prose and poetry. He was the author, among other things, of six ponderous epics, many medical treatises, two volumes of essays, and a periodical patterned after the *Spectator*. Addison praised his *Creation* in the latter periodical; but he was unsparingly ridiculed by most of the literary men of his time, until his name became a synonym for dullness.

10 25. The important place assigned, in the English schools, to the writing of Latin verse accounts for the fact that a false quantity is, in that country, regarded almost as a disgrace and the mark of an insufficient education. Two generations ago, when Latin quotations were more commonly introduced into parliamentary speeches than now, the mispronunciation of a Latin word would make the unlucky blunderer the laughing-stock of the House of Commons.

10 31. See note on 10 16.

11 8. See same note.

11 15. **Thousands of breakfast-tables.** Addison's daily paper, the *Spectator*, was a popular accompaniment of breakfast among fashionable Londoners.

12 1. **Drury Lane,** through most of the seventeenth century an aristocratic residence street, was in Addison's time given up to that life

of the town which centered in the Queen Anne coffee-houses and theaters. The Royal, or Drury Lane Theater, was (and is) at the corner of Drury Lane and Russell Street, on which were both Button's and Will's, and was, on the whole, the leading theater of the time.

12 10. **Congreve.** See note on 2 16.

12 11. **Charles Montagu** (1661–1715), who became Lord Halifax in 1699, was a statesman of extraordinary ability, particularly as a financier. The national debt and the Bank of England both date from his time, and it was due to his success in founding the latter that he was made Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1694. His subsequent fall from power and impeachment are mentioned by Macaulay on p. 29.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer is a cabinet officer, one of whose duties is to present to parliament the statement of taxation proposed for the ensuing year. In this respect his position is similar to that of our Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. He must not be confused with the Lord Chancellor, with regard to whom see note on 6 3.

12 20, 21. **Newdigate prize, Seatonian prize.** These are prizes for English verse, offered annually at Oxford and Cambridge respectively.

Heroic couplet. Define this verse-measure.

In this passage Macaulay does scant justice to the real virtues of the distinct variety of rimed couplet which Pope perfected; and he seems not to recognize the existence of any other variety at all. Pope, with his genius for saying things cleverly, with his keen wit and sparkling fancy and rhetorical power, developed a corresponding poetic style—balanced, emphatic, polished, and pointed. The decasyllabic couplet of Chaucer or Keats, on the other hand, simpler, more varied, and more flowing, is an altogether different verse-form — far more suitable for straightforward narrative and for delicate poetic feeling, though it would not have served Pope's purpose at all. Compare with one another and with the passages in the text the three following passages, noting carefully the differences in content, style, and versification, and the illustrations of what has just been said: —

> O mercy, dearè father, quod this maid.
> And with that word she both her armès laid
> About his neck, as she was wont to do.
> (The tearès brast out of her eyen two,)
> And said, O goodè father, shall I die?
> Is there no grace? is there no remedy?
>
> CHAUCER, *The Doctor's Tale* (Appius and Virginia).

> This day, black omens threat the brightest fair
> That e'er deserved a watchful spirit's care;
> Some dire disaster, or by force, or slight;
> But what, or where, the fates have wrapt in night.

Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,
Or some frail china jar receive a flaw;
Or stain her honor or her new brocade;
Forget her prayers, or miss a masquerade.

POPE, *Rape of the Lock.*

Sometimes goldfinches one by one will drop
From low-hung branches; little space they stop,
But sip, and twitter, and their feathers sleek;
Then off at once, as in a wanton freak;
Or perhaps, to show their black and golden wings,
Pausing upon their yellow flutterings.

KEATS, '*I stood tiptoe upon a little hill.*'

13 10. **Hoole,** John (1727–1803), translated from the Italian into English heroic couplets Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* and Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso.*

13 14–16. This refers to an invention of the distinguished civil engineer and architect, Sir Marc Isambard Brunel (1769–1849), which substituted machinery for hand labor in the manufacture of ships' blocks. It was employed in the government dockyards, at an immense economy of labor and money.

14 14, 15. **Duke, Stepney, Granville, Walsh,** minor English poets a few years older than Addison.

14 23. Addison furnished also arguments to most of the books of the *Æneid.* His authorship of both these and the preface was unknown at the time.

14 27. Dryden's skill in compliment was unrivaled in an age of adulation.

15 9. Notice the sudden change in subject in the midst of the paragraph. We hear no more about Addison and his calling until the second paragraph following.

15 17. In Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas.*

16 4. **Lord Chancellor.** See note on 6 3.

Somers, John (1652–1716) had taken a leading part in bringing William III. to the throne. He became William's most trusted adviser, and rose, through successive steps of legal preferment, to the high office of Lord Chancellor, which he reached in 1697. As a parliamentary orator he held with Montagu the foremost place.

17 12. **The peace of Ryswick,** concluded in 1697, marked only a temporary pause in the struggle of the English and Dutch and their allies against the ambitious plans of Louis XIV. The latter had hitherto supported the claims of James II. to the English throne; he

now recognized William as king, and Anne as his successor. But when, in 1700, he accepted the crown of Spain for his grandson, in defiance of his agreement on that point made with Great Britain and Holland, he again took up the cause of the Stuarts, and, on the death of James II. in the following year, recognized the Pretender as king of England.

18 6. **Made a rich man by his pension.** It must not be forgotten that money was worth, roughly speaking, three times as much then as now.

18 17. Addison was elected a member of the celebrated Kit-Cat Club soon after his return to England in 1703. Montagu (by that time Lord Halifax) and Somers were members of the club, which included all the great leaders of the Whig party and their most valuable literary allies. It was professedly a club of wits, but exerted an important influence in politics. It was said to have taken its name from one Christopher Cat, famous for his delectable mutton pies.

One of the rules of the club was that each member should, on his admission, name some lady as his 'toast,' and write some verses in her praise. Addison's lines, engraved on his toasting glass, were as follows:—

> While haughty Gallia's dames, that spread
> O'er their pale cheeks an artful red,
> Beheld this beauteous stranger there,
> In native charms divinely fair;
> Confusion in their looks they showed,
> And with unborrowed blushes glowed.

The same causes which gave their popularity to coffee-houses, already remarked upon, under Queen Anne, promoted the growth of clubs. Politics and the life of the town almost monopolized the attention of all men of social station. The coffee-house furnished the nucleus; only a permanent organization was needed to transform its habitual frequenters into a full-fledged club. Accordingly we find clubs of every kind, some of which Addison satirized in the *Spectator*, No. 9.

18 26. **Racine,** Jean (1639–1699), one of the greatest of French dramatic poets. The 'sacred dramas' to which Macaulay alludes (*Esther* and *Athalie*) were written about 1690.

18 28. **Dacier** (1651–1722), a distinguished French scholar, announced to Louis in 1685 his conversion to Catholicism, and was rewarded with a pension. It is illustrative of the veneration for the classics which then obtained, that the new convert should have sought in the writings of Plato for confirmation of the doctrines contained in the Athanasian creed, which, as a Catholic, he was bound to accept as authoritative.

19 8. **Joseph Spence** (1699–1768), an English clergyman, scholar, and critic, whose *Anecdotes* are full of information concerning the literary men of his time.

19 17. **Guardian,** a daily paper published by Steele in 1713 after the discontinuance of the *Spectator*. Addison was a frequent contributor to it.

19 24. **Bishop Hough.** See note on 6 3.

19 25, 26. **Malebranche** (1638–1715) and **Boileau** (1636–1711), eminent, the first as a philosopher, the second as a man of letters.

19 28. **Hobbes,** Thomas (1588–1679), a distinguished English political philosopher, whose most famous work, the *Leviathan*, argued for absolutism as the necessary basis of society.

20 1. The French Academy, originally a private society, was in 1635 converted by Richelieu into a government organization, composed of eminent scholars and writers, and charged with the function of protecting the purity of the language and pronouncing judgment on questions of literary criticism.

20 11. **Sir Joshua Reynolds** (1723–1792), the most famous of English portrait painters. He was one of the foremost figures in the society of his time, and a member of the celebrated Literary Club, which included among its members Johnson, Goldsmith, Garrick, and Burke.

Mrs. Thrale, the wife of a wealthy London brewer. Her tastes were literary, and she was ambitious to cultivate the acquaintance of literary people. After meeting Dr. Johnson, then recognized as the foremost conversationalist and man of letters of his time, she asked him to her house at Streatham, in the suburbs of London, where she and her husband made him so comfortable that it soon became almost his home.

20 15. **Absalom and Achitophel.** Who is the author of this poem?

21 24, 25. **Erasmus** (1466–1536), the great Dutch scholar who for a time held the chair of Greek at Cambridge, England, and **Fracastorius** (1483–1533), a learned Italian physician and poet, both wrote mainly in Latin.

21 25. **Robertson,** Dr. William (1721–1793), a Scotch minister, who published, in 1759, a history of Scotland, and at once took rank as a leading historian. The full title of his last work is, *A Disquisition Concerning the Knowledge which the Ancients had of India.*

21 31. **Gray,** Thomas (1716–1771), author of what famous English poem? He published Latin verses while an undergraduate at Cambridge.

21 32. **Vincent Bourne** (1695–1747) was for many years a master at Westminster School. His only publication was a small volume of very graceful Latin poems.

22 1–5. **Ne croyez,** etc. "But do not think from this that I wish to find fault with the Latin verses of one of your distinguished academicians which you sent me. I found them very beautiful, and worthy of Vida and Sannazaro, but not of Horace and Virgil."

Vida (1480(?)–1566) and Sannazaro (1458–1530) were two Italians who wrote Latin poetry, — the former *De Arte Poetica*, patterned after Horace's *Ars Poetica*, the latter an epic, *De Partu Virginis*, which won him the name of the "Christian Virgil."

23 11. See note on 17 12. This bequest of the Spanish throne to a French prince marks the beginning of the War of the Spanish Succession, in which the English, Dutch, Austrians, and a part of the German states were leagued against France and Spain. With the power of these two countries in the hands of one family, perhaps of one sovereign, no state in Europe was strong enough to defend itself. "There are no longer any Pyrenees," Louis had said to his grandson setting out for Spain. It was to restore the Pyrenees that the war was undertaken.

24 17. **Book of Gold.** In 1528, under the leadership of Andrea Doria, Genoa threw off the French yoke and became an independent republic. A list of her most important citizens was then made out, and these were called the Nobles of the Golden Book. This book was burned in a popular outbreak in 1797.

24 22. **House of Doria.** "There is one room in the first (*i.e.* the Duke of Doria's Palace) that is hung with tapestry, in which are wrought the figures of the great persons that the family has produced; as perhaps there is no family in Europe that can show a longer line of heroes that have still acted for the good of their country." (Addison's *Remarks on Italy*.)

24 24. Mediæval architecture was not highly appreciated in Addison's time. The very use of the word 'Gothic' implied disparagement; it signified something irregular and barbaric. Classic symmetry and severity formed the ideal of architecture, and a profusion of ornament was sure to be censured as in bad taste.

25 11. The evidence regarding the time when Addison began *Cato* is at first sight conflicting. Colley Cibber says that he read the first four acts of the play in 1703, and that Steele at that time said it had been "the amusement of Addison's leisure hours in Italy." Tonson also says that the first four acts were written abroad. On the other hand, Tickell, in the preface to his edition of Addison's works, says: "He took up a design of writing upon this subject when he was at the University, and even attempted something in it there, though not a

line as it now stands." Dr. Young even says that Addison at that time sent his play of *Cato* to Dryden for criticism, and that the latter returned it with the opinion that it would not succeed on the stage. But these accounts are after all not at all irreconcilable. Tickell was certainly in a position to know what he was talking about. He had been for a number of years one of Addison's nearest friends, and was his literary executor. We must reject his testimony *in toto* to believe with Macaulay that the Venetian opera "suggested to him [Addison] the thought of bringing *Cato* on the English stage." On the other hand, with the subject already in mind Addison would naturally find such a performance as he describes full of hints, and, writing with maturer powers, the resulting production might easily have little more than the title in common with his academic tragedy, so that his friends would be quite right in speaking of the first four acts of *Cato* as written in Italy.

26 19. **Pæstum.** A city in Lucania, about forty miles south from Naples, originally settled by Greek colonists, and famous for a wonderful group of three Doric temples, one of them the most complete Greek temple now existing.

26 24. **Salvator.** Salvator Rosa (1615–1673), a Neapolitan whose romantic feeling and use of landscape mark a turning-point in the history of art.

26 25. **Vico** (1668–1744), another son of Naples, who led the way toward a sound philosophy of history, and modern methods and results in the science of society. When Addison was in Italy Vico was Professor of Rhetoric in the University of Naples.

26 26. In Yucatan are crumbling ruins which were formerly supposed to be the remains of a prehistoric civilization, but which are now known to be the sites of huge communal villages of Indians, similar to the cities found in Mexico by the Spaniards, and to the Pueblo towns of New Mexico. (See Fiske's *Discovery of America*, Vol. I. pp. 134–137.)

26 34. **Philip the Fifth,** the grandson of Louis XIV. of France, the circumstances of whose accession to the throne of France were narrated on p. 23.

27 3. **The Italian dependencies of the Spanish crown.** These were the Duchy of Milan and the Kingdoms of Sardinia and the Two Sicilies. The latter included the southern part of the Italian peninsula as well as the island of Sicily.

27 15. See Virgil's *Æneid*, VI. 233.

27 17. **Fabled promontory of Circe.** See *Æneid*, VII. 10.

27 26. In the same ode alluded to on 24 11.

27 34. **Forgot his prejudices.** Not quite. Addison's comment is extremely significant. "There is nothing in this city so extraordinary as the cathedral, which a man may view with pleasure after he has seen St. Peter's, though it is quite of another make, and *can only be looked upon as one of the masterpieces of Gothic architecture. When a man sees the prodigious pains and expense that our forefathers have been at in these barbarous buildings, one cannot but fancy to himself what miracles of architecture they would have left us had they been only instructed in the right way.* . . . One would wonder to see the vast labor that has been laid out on this single cathedral. The very spouts are loaden with ornaments; the windows are formed like so many scenes of perspective, with a multitude of little pillars retiring one behind another; the great columns are finely engraven with fruits and foliage; . . . and the front covered with such a variety of figures, and overrun with so many little mazes and labyrinths of sculpture, that *nothing in the world can make a prettier show to those who prefer false beauties and affected ornaments to a noble and majestic simplicity.*" (*Remarks on Italy.*)

28 19–26. These were the opening movements of the War of the Spanish Succession. Prince Eugene was commander of the Austrian army; Catinat, of the French army in northern Italy. The Duke of Savoy at first sided with Louis, but went over to the allies in 1703. The appointment of the Earl of Manchester as Ambassador to France was mentioned on p. 18.

29 15. **Parnell.** See note on 3 11.

Prior. See note on 2 16.

29 20. **Impeached by the House of Commons.** William had tried to prevent the War of the Spanish Succession by making a secret treaty with France, stipulating that on the death of Charles II., King of Spain, that country should be divided among the rival claimants. The treaty, when it became known in England, proved very unpopular, and resulted in the impeachment of the Whig ministers in 1701.

30 3. **Death of William the Third.** In March, 1702.

30 7. **Deprived of the seals,** *i.e.* his resignation was demanded. There are now in the English cabinet five Secretaries of State, but at Queen Anne's accession only two. The seals constituted their emblem of office. Two other cabinet officers are custodians of seals, the Lord Chancellor of the Great Seal and the Lord Privy Seal of the Privy Seal.

30 9. **The Privy Council.** Most of the duties formerly attaching to this body have now been assumed by the cabinet, and the rest are mainly discharged by two or three important standing committees, so that the Privy Council does not now assemble except for routine and

purely formal business. The Council was originally a body of representative men selected by the sovereign to act as advisers of the crown in all important affairs of state, and the monarch could not constitutionally act unless so advised. It was an extraordinary act of royal disfavor to exclude from the Council Somers and Halifax, who by virtue of their position as leaders of the dominant party in the preceding Parliament were entitled to sit in it.

30 13. **He became tutor,** etc. This statement, the authority for which is a sarcastic fling of Swift's, is probably incorrect. A little later, after the death of Addison's father, he was in correspondence with the Duke of Somerset with reference to becoming tutor to his son; but the remuneration offered was not satisfactory, and the plan fell through.

30 23. The eight northern provinces of the Netherlands threw off the Spanish yoke and in 1579 proclaimed the "Union of Utrecht," thus forming the United Provinces, now the Kingdom of Holland. The southern provinces, comprising what is now Belgium, were still held by Spain as the Spanish Netherlands.

31 4. **The prerogative,** the rights of the crown as against those of Parliament.

The Church, the Established (Episcopal) Church.

> These were the two main issues in English politics at the time. The Whigs opposed the doctrine of divine right and wished to limit the power of the sovereign; and as the dissenters were mainly Whigs, the party naturally favored religious toleration. The Tories, on the other hand, were called indifferently the Church party or the country party, since their party was loyally and unwaveringly supported by the clergy and the country gentlemen. As the latter derived their incomes from the rents of their land, the Tories favored a system of taxation which should relieve land of the burden and lay it as far as possible upon trade, which centered in the cities and was favored by the Whigs. Further, since the scruples of the Tories against any attack on the power of the throne had made it difficult for them to support William against James II., and since the Tories were an intensely English party, hated all foreigners, and wished to have as little as possible to do with foreign alliances and European wars, it was not strange that William's war policy had to look for its champions to the Whigs, and that the Tories fiercely opposed it.

31 6, 7. **Godolphin, Marlborough.** These were the two leaders and directors of English politics from the accession of Anne to the overturn of parties in the elections of 1710. The Earl of Godolphin (1635(?)–1712) was a skillful financier and a cautious and conservative politician.

and as Lord High Treasurer and practically Prime Minister managed affairs at home and raised the funds for the military operations of Marlborough on the Continent. John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough (1650(?)–1722), was one of the great captains of the world. Under his leadership the splendid armies and experienced generals of the French were again and again defeated, their country devastated, and the empire of the proud old Louis brought to the verge of dismemberment. Marlborough's character was, however, stained by avarice and treachery. He was greatly assisted by his wife, who possessed unbounded influence over Anne.

31 13. **Funded debt.** The national debt began under King William. It was a Whig measure, and was bitterly opposed by the Tories, since it gave the Whig capitalists a chance for a good investment, while the country had to meet the interest charge.

32 2. This comparison for the sake of clearness has become ineffective with the lapse of time; it is now necessary to explain the explanation. In 1826 important measures of reform were before the country. The Tory party was in power, but on the question of the need of reform Tory opinion was hopelessly divided. Canning and Lord Eldon, both members of the cabinet, represent the opposing wings, the first a moderate reformer, the second an intense anti-reformer The Whigs stood ready to assist Canning, and after he became Prime Minister in the following year some of them entered his cabinet.

32 17. **Blenheim,** in Bavaria, the scene of one of Marlborough's greatest victories, won in 1704. He had marched 400 miles from his base of operations in Holland, to crush a French army which was moving against the Austrians. The battle changed the entire European situation, and threw France on the defensive.

32 22. **The Imperial throne,** occupied by Leopold, Archduke of Austria.

32 23. **The Act of Settlement.** This act of Parliament decreed that on the death of Anne without issue the crown should pass to the House of Hanover. This was, of course, an exclusion of the Stuarts, whom Louis had recognized as the heirs (see note on 17 12), and whom the French, if victorious, would probably attempt to restore.

32 32. **Newmarket,** the great English race-course.

33 16 ff. This anecdote is on the authority of Budgell, in his *Life of Lord Orrery*, and is, as Leslie Stephen remarks, "reported with suspicious fullness."

34 16. **The similitude of the angel.** This is the best passage in the poem, and the one oftenest quoted. It is as follows: —

So when an angel by divine command
With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,
Such as of late o'er pale Britannia passed,
Calm and serene he drives the furious blast;
And, pleased the Almighty's orders to perform,
Rides in the whirlwind, and directs the storm.

34 17. **Commissionership.** He was made Commissioner of Appeals in the Excise, succeeding the philosopher Locke in the office.

35 28. **Lifeguardsman.** The Lifeguards are the two senior regiments of the sovereign's mounted bodyguard, and are all at least six feet tall.

35 31. **Mamelukes,** originally slaves purchased by the Sultan of Egypt and made into an army. They soon discovered their power, and in 1254 made one of their number Sultan. They were masters of Egypt until its conquest by the Turks in 1517, and remained a powerful military aristocracy until their perfidious massacre in the citadel of Cairo in 1811. At the time of Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1797 the Mamelukes attacked him in the battle of the Pyramids, under the leadership of Mourad Bey, and were severely beaten.

36 24. **The Boyne,** the river in Ireland which gave its name to the decisive victory gained upon its banks by William III. in 1690, when he defeated James II. and the French and Irish troops supporting him, and secured his own claim to the English throne.

36 25. **John Philips** (1676–1709), one of the minor poets of the time. His poem on Blenheim was written after Addison's, and was produced by request of some of the Tory leaders as a kind of counter-blast to the *Campaign*. Notice his use of blank verse and imitation of Milton's style.

37 18. **Johnson,** in his *Life of Addison*, had contended that the comparison was not a true simile at all, and that it was too obvious to deserve much praise. "Marlborough is so like the angel in the poem that the action of both is almost the same, and performed by both in the same manner. Marlborough 'teaches the battle to rage'; the angel 'directs the storm': Marlborough is 'unmoved in peaceful thought'; the angel is 'calm and serene': Marlborough stands 'unmoved amidst the shock of hosts'; the angel rides 'calm in the whirlwind.' The lines on Marlborough are just and noble; but the simile gives almost the same images a second time."

Though Macaulay would not "dispute the general justice of Johnson's remarks," Mr. Courthope has not hesitated to do so. He defends Addison as follows: "It was Addison's intention to raise in the mind of the reader

the noblest possible idea of composure and design in the midst of confusion; to do this he selected an angel as the minister of the divine purpose, and a storm as the symbol of fury and devestation. . . . Johnson has noticed the close similarity between the persons of Marlborough and the angel; but he has exaggerated the resemblance between the actions in which they are severally engaged." (Courthope's *Addison* in *English Men of Letters*.)

38 14. **Victor Amadeus**, the Duke of Savoy mentioned on 28 22, and note.

38 20. **Empress Faustina** (*d.* A.D. 175), wife of the Roman Emperor, Marcus Aurelius. Her life was scandalously immoral.

39 12. **Santa Croce**, the church at Florence in which are buried, among other famous Florentines, Dante, Michelangelo, Machiavelli, and Galileo.

39 14. An allusion to the celebrated passage in Dante's *Inferno*, Canto V. The affecting story of the lovers, Paolo and Francesca, is also the theme of Leigh Hunt's poem, *Rimini*.

39 19. This is exaggerated praise. Filicaja's poetry is unequal, and is often vitiated by an artificial style. He lived 1642–1707.

40 2. **Rowe**, Nicholas (1674–1718), one of the not inconsiderable number of English Poet Laureates whose laurel has withered sadly with time. His best work was as a dramatic writer.

40 18. **Great Seal.** See note on 30 7. The Great Seal is the seal of state. It is affixed to the writs which summon a new Parliament, as well as to treaties and similar documents.

40 19. **Somers and Halifax.** See 30 8, and note on 30 9.

40 24. **Secretary of State.** See note on 30 7.

40 27. **Charles, Earl of Sunderland** (1675–1722). He was personally very repugnant to Queen Anne, but he was Marlborough's son-in-law, and was forced upon her. He later became Prime Minister under George I., but was involved in the scandals connected with the South Sea Bubble, and disgraced in consequence. Tickell's edition of Addison's works was dedicated to him.

40 30. Godolphin and Marlborough were still nominally Tories; but in the following year they formally declared themselves Whigs. Their secession left the leadership of the party to Robert Harley (1661–1724), who later became Earl of Oxford, and to Henry St. John (1678–1751), subsequently raised to the peerage with the title of Viscount Bolingbroke.

41 7. **Prosecution of Sacheverell.** This was not until 1710. Sacheverell was a London clergyman, and a narrow and violent Tory. He accordingly preached a sermon reflecting on the government, and strongly upheld the extreme Tory doctrine that it was unlawful under

any circumstances to oppose the monarch by force — a doctrine which, of course, impeached the title of William III. and Anne. This sermon was printed, and resulted in Sacheverell's impeachment. He was convicted, but only a nominal penalty was imposed; and the excitement caused by his trial contributed materially to the defeat of the Whigs in the elections of the same year, which resulted in the fall of Godolphin and the accession to power of Harley and St. John.

41 12. **Lord President of the Council.** The presiding officer of the Privy Council is a member of cabinet.

42 5. The censorship of the press ceased in 1693.

42 13. **Conduct of the Allies.** This pamphlet, written by Swift in the interest of Harley and the Tory party, proved a most effective campaign document. Swift himself said that it furnished all the Tory orators in Parliament with their arguments. It sought to show that English interests had been entirely sacrificed to those of the continental allies in the War of the Spanish Succession, and so to win the nation to the Tory policy of an early peace.

42 14. **The Freeholder** was a political paper published by Addison during the first half of the year 1716. It appeared twice a week, and was written in the interest of the new King (George I.) and his ministry. See p. 87.

43 5. **Grub Street,** once in a respectable residence quarter of London, had been left behind by the tide of fashion, even then setting strongly westward, and abandoned to cheap lodgings, not too high-priced for the very slender purses of the impecunious hack-writers who swarmed in it and desperately fought starvation with their pens.

43 13. **St. John.** See note on 40 30.

43 17. **Swift,** Jonathan (1667–1745), was originally a Whig, but went over to the Tories on their accession to power in 1710. This was partly because as a clergyman of the Church of England he was more in sympathy with the Tories on church issues, and partly because the Tory leaders, especially Harley, made much of him and took him into their inner circle. His literary services to the party were of the first importance (see note on 42 13), and gave him great influence. He himself says that he could get office for everybody but himself. He wished a bishopric, but owing to the opposition of Anne was obliged to content himself with the Deanery of St. Patrick's in Dublin. He withdrew thither in 1714, and never afterward returned to England save once, in 1726, for a brief visit with Pope.

43 24. **His cassock and his pudding sleeves,** an allusion to the customary dress of an Anglican clergyman. 'Pudding,' *i.e.* wide-puffed.

44 11–19. This is more interesting as an illustration of Macaulay's love of paradox than convincing as an explanation of the reasons for Addison's popularity.

44 22. **Mary Montagu.** Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1687–1762) was for many years one of the most conspicuous figures in English society. Of noble blood, and the wife of a distinguished politician, she was also something of a writer, and fond of the society of literary men. Her friendship with Pope and the subsequent bitter quarrel between them are familiar incidents in that poet's life, and occasioned some of his bitterest satire.

44 28. **Stella.** When Swift left college he became private secretary to Sir William Temple, and there grew very fond of Esther Johnson, the daughter of Temple's housekeeper. She afterwards crossed to Ireland to live near Swift, and they were always fast friends. Rumor had it that they were secretly married, but the evidence is by no means satisfactory. There was never, however, any suspicion of scandal in their relations. While Swift was in England he wrote his Journal to Stella — a kind of pet name which he always used — keeping her informed of all the details of his life and movements.

45 1. **Young,** Edward (1681–1765), best known as the author of *Night Thoughts,* is a poet whose somber and meditative genius is less esteemed in the present than it was in the last century.

45 13. Macaulay quotes from Pope's confirmatory allusion to the same trait in his famous characterization of Addison: —

> Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
> And, without sneering, teach the rest to sneer.

45 16. *Tatler,* No. 163.

45 17. *Spectator,* No. 568.

45 27. **When the play ended.** Theatrical performances ordinarily began in Addison's time at five o'clock, so that at their conclusion the evening was still young.

46 32. **Boswell,** James (1740–1795), was a Scotchman who was so impressed with the greatness of Johnson that he left his home and went to London to get a sight of him. In the course of time Johnson's favor and friendship exalted him to the summit of earthly felicity. He spent his days and nights in studying his hero and noting down every word that fell from his lips. As a result his *Life of Johnson* is a masterpiece of biography, and Boswellism a synonym of hero-worship.

46 33. **Hurd,** Richard, D.D. (1720–1808), Bishop of Worcester, edited the works of Bishop Warburton after the death of the latter, with a prefatory life of enthusiastic eulogy.

47 12. He was generally considered insane, and was so pronounced by the coroner's jury after his suicide. The crime of which he was accused (l. 14) was the forgery of a will.

47 18. Budgell left on his desk a slip of paper on which was written: —

> What Cato did and Addison approved
> Cannot be wrong.

47 24. The nickname of 'Namby-Pamby' was bestowed upon Philips in ridicule of some children's verses written by him, one of which began: —

> Dimply damsel, sweetly smiling.

Philips was the author, or rather translator, of the play *The Distressed Mother*, to which Addison takes Sir Roger de Coverley in the *Spectator*, No. 335. The *Spectator* was not ignorant of the art of puffing.

47 28 ff. Macaulay in his admiration for Addison is very unfair to Steele. Sometimes it is by downright misstatement; more often by false coloring not easy to correct within the limits of these notes. The reader is referred to Forster's essay on Steele, published in the *Quarterly Review*, No. CXCII., for a detailed answer to Macaulay, and to Aitken's *Life of Steele* (2 vols., pp. 419, 452) for an exhaustive biography.

47 32. **Had led a vagrant life.** By no means, unless Macaulay means that as a soldier he could of course have no permanent place of residence. Steele himself tells us that he lost the succession to an Irish estate when he went into the army, but military service was far from being a social degradation. The army afforded a career for gentlemen; Steele enlisted as a cadet in the Lifeguards, the privates in which were gentlemen's sons, and soon became an officer. Within six years of the time he left Oxford he was captain in the army, and one of the fashionable London wits. No one would guess from the text that when Addison returned from his travels he found his old schoolfellow in social standing quite his equal, and in literary reputation decidedly his superior.

48 2 ff. Notice Macaulay's fondness for antithesis, and the dangers of such a style.

48 4. **His principles weak.** His principles were high, and his conduct above the standard of the age. "Not that Steele was worse than his time," says Thackeray; "on the contrary, a far better, truer, and higher-hearted man than most who lived in it." (*English Humorists.*)

48 4–6. This is a harsh way of saying that he could not live up to his ideal; most of us cannot. But he tried. "Steele committed no error which he did not honestly regret, as we know by the prayers and

other pieces that have come down to us. . . . The inconsistency which was so often evident between his private life and his published writings arose from a certain weakness of character; his purpose was consistently good, but he had not always sufficient strength of will to enable him to carry it out." (Aitken's *Life of Steele*, II. 345.)

48 7. **Much of the rake, and a little of the swindler.** He was an affectionate and, so far as known, a faithful husband at a time when fidelity was an unfashionable virtue; and he respected womanhood, and taught others to respect it, in an age which regarded women as playthings and considered seduction an amusement. As for the second charge, it is true that he was constantly behindhand, and often sued for debt; but swindler is a hard name for a man who, with a large but variable income, lives ahead of it, borrows on too confident expectations, and gets into the clutches of money-lenders.

48 11. **Diced himself into a sponging-house.** This is purely imaginary. "Steele . . . attacked, with all the vigor of which he was capable, the fashionable vice of gambling." (Courthope's *Life of Addison*, p. 99. See *Tatler*, Nos. 25, 26, 29, 39.)

48 12. **Drank himself into a fever.** Steele often drank too much; what has Macaulay just said about Addison?

48 13. **Not unmingled with scorn.** "So much the worse for Addison, if that be true; for very certainly he succeeded in concealing it from his friend, and, we imagine, from every one but Mr. Macaulay." (C. P. Forster, in *Quarterly Review*.)

48 14. **Introduced him to the great.** See note on 47 32.

48 15. **Procured a good place for him.** See note on 51 24.

48 21. It is strange that Mr. Aitken has been unable to discover in the records of the law-courts, which contain abundant proofs of Steele's pecuniary troubles, any evidence of this transaction. But the story is confirmed by too many narratives to warrant our rejecting it. The most trustworthy account is that given by the actor, Benjamin Victor. According to this, Addison intended from the beginning to recover by process of law, hoping to teach Steele a lesson. Certainly the latter did not lack instruction of this kind.

48 34. **Fielding's Amelia.** Henry Fielding (1707–1754), one of the greatest of English novelists. His best works, *Tom Jones* and the *History of Amelia*, give a vivid picture of English life in the eighteenth century.

49 11 ff. Macaulay does not pretend that this picture is more than imaginary; it is therefore unnecessary to waste much time over it. But it should be noticed that the amount of the loan was, according to

Victor, not £100, but £1000; and it is certain that Addison was in very comfortable circumstances at the time when it was made.

50 26. In Bohn's edition of Addison's works it is stated that the Irish Journals contain only eight entries respecting him during the time that he sat as member, and that "no actual speeches are there recorded, but merely minutes."

50 33. **Westminster.** Both Houses of Parliament hold their sessions in Westminster Palace.

51 23. The Gazetteer was the editor of the *Gazette*, a newspaper published by the state. Charles II. established it in 1665, and suppressed all other newspapers, in order to prevent the publication of anything that might hurt the government. The licensing act, the means of this suppression, expired in 1695, but the government continued the *Gazette*, supplying it with official information on state affairs. It still survives; it appears twice a week, and contains all government proclamations, orders, and regulations, and legal notices of various kinds.

51 24. Steele was appointed Gazetteer, "not by Sunderland at the request of Addison, as Mr. Macaulay says, but by Harley at the request of Maynwaring, as both Swift and Steele inform us." (Forster.)

51 33, 34. **Will's, the Grecian.** Two well-known coffee-houses, patronized, the first by the wits and the second by scholars.

52 3. Steele from the beginning attacked vices, and labored to improve manners and morals. Macaulay is wrong in representing Addison as the leader. "There is scarcely a department of essay-writing developed in the *Spectator* which does not trace its origin to Steele." (Courthope's *Addison*.)

52 10–17. Steele could not vie with Addison in refinement and elevation of thought and elegance of manner; but he is more spontaneous, and knew far better how to touch the emotions. His humor is fresh and hearty, and is very far from being the mere overflow of animal spirits.

52 22. Partridge's almanac pretended to predict coming events, historical as well as meteorological. Bickerstaff declared himself to be the only one gifted with the power to read the future, and offered to stake his reputation on the prophecy that Partridge would die on a certain day. The day went by, and a second pamphlet appeared, also written by Swift but under another pseudonym, relating how the prophecy had come true. Poor Partridge was furious; he protested in print that he was still alive and well, but to no avail. Swift assured him that he was dead, whatever he might say; and Partridge was snowed under by the pamphlets of the wits.

52 34 ff. This quotation is from Steele's preface to the first collected edition of the *Tatler*. But it is altogether unfair to take at its face value Steele's confession of indebtedness to his friend. On that subject his generous enthusiasm always carries him away. Steele wrote 188 papers to Addison's 42; wherever Addison succeeded in a new departure it was by following a path which Steele had first struck out; and if Addison's was the finer literary workmanship, Steele's was the richer humor, the more genuine pathos, and the warmer heart. "If Steele had not furnished Addison with the opportunity for displaying his special power, Addison would in all probability have been known to us only as an accomplished scholar and poet of no great power. The world owes Addison to Steele." (Aitken's *Life of Steele*, I. 248.)

53 19. **Temple,** Sir William (1628–1699), an English diplomatist, statesman, and essayist. He was a kinsman of Swift. See note on 44 28.

53 23. **Horace Walpole** (1717–1797), son of Sir Robert Walpole (see note on 89 34), was a literary dilettante, and a lifelong friend of the poet Gray. His six volumes of correspondence are full of gossipy information.

53 24. **Half German jargon.** Carlyle was at the height of his reputation when Macaulay wrote this Essay.

53 29. **Menander** (342–291(?) B.C.), a Greek dramatic poet, of whose comedies only fragments have been preserved.

53 31. **Cowley** (1618–1667), a leader in the seventeenth century school of 'conceited' poets. The characteristics of this school were fancy and ingenuity. In their effort for originality and 'wit' they used the most remote analogies, and were often harsh, cold, or obscure.

Butler (1612–1680) satirized the Puritans in his *Hudibras*, to the great amusement of Charles II. and his courtiers.

54 3–6. Not many people would consider that the mere invention of fictions, however numerous, or however original or happy, would by itself prove a very good title to 'the rank of a great poet.' The creation of character which Macaulay praises in l. 12 would constitute a better claim; but the half satiric, half sympathetic observation of life which produces a Sir Roger de Coverley is still far removed from the poetic imagination which gives birth to an Ophelia or a Lear; and even this imagination would be dumb and ineffectual if unwedded to poetic diction.

54 11. **Clarendon,** Edward Hyde, Earl of (1608–1674), father-in-law of James II., and virtually Prime Minister under Charles II.; famous also as the author of a history of the war between Charles I. and his Parliament.

54 15. **Cervantes** (1547–1616). Author of what immortal work?

55 17. **Jack Pudding,** a juggler who amuses the crowd by feats of voracity; a buffoon.

55 32, 33. These are all eighteenth century periodicals.

57 6. **Bettesworth,** an Irish barrister whom Swift satirized.

57 7. **Le Franc, Marquis de Pompignan,** a somewhat conceited poet, ventured on his admission to the French Academy to attack the philosophers. Voltaire overwhelmed him with ridicule by anonymous pamphlets, which made him the laughing-stock of Paris and drove him back to his province.

57 17. **Jeremy Collier** (1650–1726), an English clergyman, published in 1698 a work on the *Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage,* which attracted wide attention and helped to bring about a much needed reformation.

57 18. **Sir George Etherege** (1635(?)–1691) and **William Wycherley** (1640(?)–1715) were two of the worst offenders against decency among the Restoration dramatists. Etherege was the first to introduce the pure comedy of manners, and Wycherley's work, in spite of its coarseness and brutality, shows marked dramatic power.

57 25. **John Hale** (1584–1656) and **John Tillotson** (1630–1694), two distinguished Anglican divines, the latter Archbishop of Canterbury.

57 26. **Congreve.** See note on 2 16.

57 27. **Vanbrugh** (1666(?)–1726), another of the popular dramatists who fell under Collier's just censure.

57 6–10. **Tom Folio,** *Tatler,* No. 158.

Ned Softly, *Tatler,* No. 163.

The Political Upholsterer, *Tatler,* No. 155.

Court of Honor, *Tatler,* Nos. 250, 253, 256, 259, 262, 265. But in all of the papers on this subject Steele is supposed to have had a hand.

Thermometer of Zeal, *Tatler,* No. 220.

Frozen Words, *Tatler,* No. 254.

Memoirs of the Shilling, *Tatler,* No. 249.

58 24–26. The absurdity of this statement will be seen by referring again to the notes on 52 3, 10–17, 34 ff.

59 5. **Outbreaks** due, the first to popular sympathy with Queen Caroline, who was so shamefully treated by her husband, George IV., that she left him and in 1820 was brought to trial on a charge of adultery; the second to the agitation in favor of the Reform Bill, finally carried by Lord John Russell in 1832.

59 15. **Marli.** The village of Marly-le-Roi is situated four miles from the palace of Versailles, and was at times the residence of Louis XIV.

59 16. **St. James's** was the royal residence in London during the eighteenth century.

59 19. **Sunderland.** See note to 40 27.

59 25. **Break his white staff.** This is the emblem of office of the Lord Treasurer.

60 6–15. But it must not be forgotten that this same ministry had protracted a burdensome and bloody war for their partisan advantage, having rejected proposals for peace which conceded to them everything for which they had begun hostilities, and that instead of defending England they were now trying unjustly to conquer France.

60 12. England and Scotland, though ruled by the same king from the accession of James I., were independent countries with separate governments until 1707, when the union was peacefully carried through.

60 17–20. Macaulay was a good Whig, and liked to remind the Tories of their failures. Both the War of American Independence and the Napoleonic wars took place under Tory rule. It was during the latter that an English army was sent, in 1809, to seize Antwerp. The expedition was disgracefully mismanaged, and the troops, left on the low isle of Walcheren, were wasted by disease until they were good for nothing. The failure of the enterprise caused the resignation from the ministry of Canning and Castlereagh, who fought a duel over the question of responsibility.

61 6. **That he must think of turning tutor again.** This seems incredible. In this same year he bought his Bilton estate, which cost him £10,000. He must have saved a good deal of money from the emoluments of office, and the *Spectator* was paying well. His brother had died in the Indies two years before, and left him a large estate; but it was badly managed, and yielded him but little. This is probably the fortune which Addison said he had lost.

61 12. **Whig corporations.** The government of many of the towns was then in the hands of corporations, which were not elected by the citizens, but were self-perpetuating. These corporations selected the members of Parliament for their towns.

62 11. There is no reason for thinking that Steele owed his retention in the Commissionership to Addison, as Macaulay implies. Swift believed that it was his influence with Harley that saved Steele, though the latter denied that this was true.

62 26. This is another illustration of Macaulay's persistent belittling of Steele.

63 7, 8. See note on 51 33, 34.

63 15–24. Mr. Courthope in his *Life of Addison* argues that, as the *Spectator* paper was the joint enterprise of Addison and Steele, and as the Spectator Club is the framework of the whole design, its general outline must have been planned by both of them together. After quoting Macaulay's words in the text, he says: "This is a very misleading account of the matter. It implies that the characters in the *Spectator* were mere casual conceptions of Steele's; that Addison knew nothing about them till he saw Steele's rough draft; and that he, and he alone, is the creator of the finished character of Sir Roger de Coverley. But, as a matter of fact, the character of Sir Roger is full of contradictions and inconsistencies; and the want of unity which it presents is easily explained by the fact that it is the work of four different hands.... It had evidently been predetermined by the designers of the *Spectator* that the Club should consist of certain recognized and familiar types; the different writers, in turns, worked on these types, each for his own purpose and according to the bent of his own genius." But Addison was nevertheless, as Macaulay says, the creator of Sir Roger as we know him. As Mr. Courthope says, "Steele gave the first sketch of Sir Roger in a few rough but vigorous strokes, which were afterwards greatly refined and altered by Addison."

63 32, 33. **Richardson, Fielding, Smollett.** The English novel dates from the middle of the eighteenth century, when the works of these three great writers appeared. Richardson (1689–1761), "the father of the English novel," was first in the field, with his *Pamela*, in 1640. This led Fielding (see note on 48 34) to write his *Joseph Andrews*, begun as a satire on *Pamela*, but completed with slight reference to that design. In 1748 came *Tom Jones*, the greatest book of the whole period. Smollett (1721–1771) began to write in 1749, when *Roderick Random* appeared. Other famous novels of his are *Peregrine Pickle* and *Humphrey Clinker*.

64 9. **The Mohawks.** These were bands of dissolute young men who infested the streets of London at night, diverting themselves with such pleasant amusements as beating or mutilating citizens and rolling women down hill in barrels.

64 10. **The Distressed Mother.** See note on 47 24.

64 31, 32. This is an extreme statement, as Mr. Forster shows in detail; and yet, as Mr. Leslie Stephen says, "there can be no doubt that Addison's essays were those which achieved the widest popularity, which are still remembered when the old *Spectator* is mentioned, and which were the admiration of all the critics of the eighteenth century." ('Addison' in *Dictionary of National Biography*.)

65 23–27. Nos. 26, 329, 69, 317, 159, 343, 517.

66 13. **The stamp tax.** This was imposed by the Tories in 1712, and was intended to lessen the number of publications and so to cut off some of the attacks on the government. It required a half-penny stamp on each printed half-sheet. Only the strongest papers could live under so heavy a tax.

67 9. **The Guardian.** See note on 19 17.

67 15. **Nestor Ironside and the Miss Lizards.** These characters fill in the *Guardian* the position held in the *Spectator* by the members of the Spectator Club.

68 9. No attempt was then made at accurate historical costuming.

68 15. **Booth,** Barton (1681–1733), made his reputation in the part of Cato as the leading actor of his time.

68 18. **The Inns of Court.** Four buildings (Gray's Inn, Lincoln's Inn, The Inner Temple, and The Middle Temple) owned and occupied by the London barristers.

68 20. The territory within the limits of the original city of London is the business center of the metropolis. The "auxiliaries from the City" were therefore made up of representatives of the commercial class, who were not supposed to know much about literature.

68 22. **Jonathan's and Garraway's,** two coffee-houses frequented by brokers and merchants.

68 33. **Kit-Cat.** See note on 18 17.

68 34. The October Club was made up of Tories, and represented the extreme wing of the party.

69 30. **Bolingbroke.** See note on 40 30.

70 24. **Athalie.** See note on 18 26.

Saul. The most successful play of Vittorio Alfieri(1749–1803), a great Italian dramatist who followed the classic model. "He occupies his scene with one great action and one ruling passion, and removes from it every accessory event or feeling." (*Enc. Brit.*)

Of **Cinna,** which was written by Corneille, the same work says that it is "perhaps generally considered the poet's masterpiece, and it undoubtedly contains the finest single scene in all French tragedy, a scene which may take rank with any other perhaps ever written." *Cato* can claim no such praise as this. But Macaulay seems to underestimate the whole school.

71 32. It may be, as Macaulay says, that Pope was more galled by the censure than gratified by the praise, but it is not likely; and, further, there is not the slightest particle of evidence for it. On the contrary, Pope's expressions certainly show gratitude for the favorable

notice, which was, he says, so lavish of praise as to make him hope it indicates a particular partiality to himself. This letter was sent, not to Addison, whom Pope did not know at the time, but to Steele, whom he regarded as the author of the criticism; and it led to his introduction to Addison.

72 4. **Whom he had injured without provocation.** This is another assumption. Dennis had very likely criticised Pope's Pastorals, and so drawn upon himself Pope's ridicule in the *Essay on Criticism*, vv. 585–587:—

> But Appius reddens at each word you speak,
> And stares tremendous with a threatening eye,
> Like some old tyrant done in tapestry.

Dennis's reply to these three comparatively innocent lines was an abusive pamphlet of thirty-two pages, in which he called Pope a 'hunchbacked toad,' 'a little affected hypocrite,' 'the very bow of the god of love,' etc.

73 20–23. Here again Macaulay is altogether too hard on Steele. His friends, it is true, were inclined to regret his abandonment of the *Guardian* in order to devote himself to political writing; but there was no lack of respect in their comments on his conduct. He was, of course, virulently attacked and calumniated by the Tory writers.

76 26, 27. As Swift grew older his pessimism and fierce hatred of society increased, and his last years were darkened by terrible suffering and mental disease. In 1708 Swift was in the full strength and vigor of middle life, influential and active among men; in 1738 he was over seventy, and descending through a lonely and wretched old age to his most pitiable end.

76 34. Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, which was written as a satire on abuses in the Church, was regarded as an attack on the Christian religion itself. It is supposed to have roused the hostility of Queen Anne, and so to have made Swift's elevation to a bishopric impossible.

77 4. **Sacrificed honor and consistency to revenge.** See note on 43 17. Undoubtedly personal motives had their influence on Swift, but there is no occasion for saying that his change of party was entirely due to them.

77 32. **More odious than any other man,** because he was suspected of having been concerned in the plot to bring back the Stuarts to the throne, which some of the Tory leaders had formed. Within a few years, however, Swift was very popular in Ireland.

78 31. But Steele asserts positively, in the letter to Congreve prefixed to the second edition of the play, that Addison was its author.

79 4. In 1715 a rising took place in Scotland in favor of the Stuart Pretender, — the rebellion described in Scott's novel of *Rob Roy*.

79 12. **Squire Western,** in Fielding's novel, *Tom Jones*.

80 1. **He accordingly determined,** etc. The absurdity of representing that Steele started the *Town Talk* because he was dissatisfied with the moderation of the *Freeholder* is evident when we remember that the first number of the *Freeholder* appeared on December 23, and of the *Town Talk* on December 17. Nor is it remarkable that the latter has not been handed down to fame, since only nine numbers of it appeared.

80 11. **Pope was false and malevolent.** In the case of Pope, as of Steele, we must guard against Macaulay's characterization of him. To give to Pope's sensitive and morbid nature and strangely mixed character the right interpretation called for a skill in reading motives which Macaulay, with all his powers, did not possess. He had the historic, but not the dramatic, imagination; he did not hold the key to the human heart. It is easy to paint Pope black; and Macaulay admits into his picture no other color. Yet the injustice is hard to correct, because his mistake lies, not in a misstatement, but in a misinterpretation, of facts. Pope's treatment of his friends cannot always be called honorable according to our standards; he was unfortunately fond of equivocation, and not afraid of downright falsehood; and those who injured him he hated with a rancorous and uncontrolled vindictiveness; and still he should not be called unqualifiedly false and malevolent. See Thackeray's essay on Pope in *English Humorists of the Eighteenth Century*.

80 19. **The Rosicrucian mythology.** See Pope's letter to Miss Arabella Fermor prefixed to the *Rape of the Lock*.

80 20. **He asked Addison's advice.** It is not at all unlikely that this anecdote is fictitious, and invented by Pope to strengthen his case against Addison.

81 25. See note on 21 25.

81 26–29. This also is doubtful. It is one of Spence's anecdotes (see note on 19 8), and was related to him by Pope, whose veracity cannot be relied upon.

81 33 ff. This whole story Macaulay takes from Pope's account to Spence. With regard to it Mr. Courthope says: "It is scarcely necessary to say that, after the light that has been thrown on Pope's character by the detection of the frauds he practised in the publication of his correspondence, it is impossible to give any credence to the tales he poured into Spence's ear, tending to blacken Addison's character and to exalt his own."

82 32. There is no question, however, of the great merits of Pope's *Iliad* as an independent poem, great as are its defects as a translation.

83 14. There does seem to have been in circulation a vague rumor that Tickell was not the real author of his Translation. See Elwin and Courthope's edition of Pope's *Works*, Vol. V. p. 158.

84 32, 33. **Satirist, Age.** Two unprincipled papers which, at the time when Macaulay was writing his essay, had become notorious by the publication of sensational and scandalous news. The editor of the *Age* was soon after sent to prison for criminal libel.

85 12. See note on 44 22.

85 27. Pope had had privately printed for Bolingbroke a book written by the latter, and had ordered the printer to strike off and keep a large number of additional copies, after having, according to Bolingbroke, introduced various alterations.

86 6. This whole story is probably apocryphal. See Courthope's *Life of Addison*, pp. 135–138.

86 25. Pope wished it to be believed that he sent the lines to Addison, but it is not at all likely that he did, or that Addison ever saw them. They first appeared in print in 1722, and Pope was accused of having written them after Addison's death. Pope, of course, wished to show that Addison was in fault for the quarrel, and that his own conduct had been entirely honorable. The lines were afterwards included in the *Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot*, and are as follows: —

> Peace to all such! but were there one whose fires
> True genius kindles, and fair fame inspires;
> Blest with each talent and each art to please,
> And born to write, converse, and live with ease;
> Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
> Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne,
> View him with scornful, yet with jealous eyes,
> And hate for arts that caused himself to rise;
> Damn with faint praise, assent with civil leer,
> And without sneering, teach the rest to sneer;
> Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike;
> Just hint a fault, and hesitate dislike;
> Alike reserved to blame or to commend,
> A timorous foe, and a suspicious friend;
> Dreading even fools, by flatterers besieged,
> And so obliging that he ne'er obliged;
> Like Cato, give his little senate laws,
> And sit attentive to his own applause;
> While wits and templars every sentence raise,

And wonder with a foolish face of praise:
Who but must laugh, if such a man there be?
Who would not weep, if Atticus were he?

86 34. But his praise of Pope is always with some reserve, and does not equal that bestowed on such minor writers of his coterie as Philips and Tickell.

87 10. Addison's field was social, not personal satire. He is always good-humored and without passion; and he was no more Pope's match than a non-combatant with a taste for archery is a match for a trained duelist.

87 15. **Joseph Surface** is a hypocritical professor of youthful virtue and sober-headedness in Sheridan's comedy, *The School for Scandal.* Sir Peter Teazle is another character in the same play.

88 10. **Countess Dowager,** *i.e.* the widowed mother of the heir to the title.

88 13. **Holland House.** With this historic mansion Macaulay himself had close associations, for he was a frequent visitor there during the life of the third Lord Holland, when Lady Holland's drawing-rooms used to number among their distinguished guests many men of letters. Holland House was built in 1607 by Henry Rich, Earl of Holland, from whom it took its name, and whose descendant, Edward Rich, Earl of Warwick and Holland, had been the first husband of the Countess Dowager, Addison's wife. This family becoming extinct, the house passed into other hands, and though its later owners again bore the title of Holland, it was by a new patent. Macaulay in his Essay on Lord Holland speaks with feeling of "those turrets and gardens which are associated with so much that is interesting and noble — with the courtly magnificence of Rich, with the loves of Ormond, with the counsels of Cromwell, with the death of Addison . . . that dwelling . . . the favorite resort of wits and beauties, of painters and poets, of scholars, philosophers, and statesmen."

88 14. **Nell Gwynn,** an actress who became mistress of Charles II.

89 5. **Lycidas.** What were the circumstances which led Milton to write his great poem of this name?

89 11. See note on 61 6.

89 15. **William Somervile** (1677–1742), a country gentleman and minor poet, whose most important work, *The Chase,* celebrates the joys of hunting with dogs, in about 2000 lines of Miltonic blank verse.

89 29–34. The old Whig leaders, Godolphin, Halifax, Somers, and Wharton, were now dead, and besides, it was the policy of George I. to place in power the younger men. Lord Townshend (1674–1738) had

not in the previous reign been in the cabinet, but had won distinction by his negotiation of the so-called 'barrier treaty' with Holland, while on an embassy to that country. The Tories attacked him bitterly for this, but when George I. came in he gave Townshend the leading place in his Whig ministry. Sunderland, jealous of his power, succeeded in undermining his influence with the King, whom Townshend offended by his reluctance to support the continental interests of the House of Hanover at England's expense; and the minister was consequently dismissed.

Sir Robert Walpole (1676–1745) was Townshend's brother-in-law, and though he had been in the cabinet in Godolphin's ministry, and was really the ablest of all the Whigs, he held decidedly a second place. On Townshend's dismissal Walpole resigned, and though both of them were afterwards admitted to office again under Sunderland, it was not until the ruin of that minister by the bursting of the South Sea Bubble in 1721 that they took a leading part in the government. From that time on Walpole for more than twenty years held power as Prime Minister.

90 12. **Vincent Bourne.** See note on 21 32.

90 17. **Craggs,** James (1686–1721), won his way in politics by his capacity for business and his skill in debate. He was, like Sunderland, implicated in the affairs of the South Sea Company. See also the mention of him on 94 27 ff.

90 23. In Macaulay's day this allusion was instantly understood. Joseph Hume (1777–1855) was a prominent Liberal, who during a lifetime of parliamentary service devoted himself especially to cutting off extravagant or unnecessary expenditures.

91 10. Mr. Courthope doubts the report of Addison's domestic infelicity. See *Life of Addison*, p. 147.

91 14. **House of Rich.** See note on 88 13.

92 26–31. In the year 1711 the Tory ministry, although supported by a large majority in the House of Commons, found themselves unable to carry out their policy because of the opposition of the House of Lords, where the Whigs were in control. To break the deadlock between the two Houses the Queen was persuaded by Harley to create twelve new peers, all Tories, thus swamping the majority unfavorable to the ministry.

94 6. **The Duenna,** a very popular comedy written by Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751–1816), and first acted in 1775.

94 12–15. It is interesting to note that when Macaulay first wrote the essay he did not know that Norris was the actor alluded to as

'little Dicky,' but nevertheless had the sagacity to interpret aright the passage on which his predecessor had stumbled. The sentence in the text first appeared as follows:—

"Little Dicky was evidently the nickname of some comic actor who played the usurer Gomez, then a most popular part, in Dryden's *Spanish Friar*."

To this sentence Macaulay appended the following note:—

"We will transcribe the whole paragraph. How it can have been misunderstood is unintelligible to us.

"But our author's chief concern is for the poor House of Commons, whom he represents as naked and defenseless, when the crown by losing this prerogative, would be less able to protect them against the power of a House of Lords. Who forbears laughing when the *Spanish Friar* represents little Dicky, under the person of Gomez, insulting the colonel that was able to fright him out of his wits with a single frown? This Gomez, says he, flew upon him like a dragon, got him down, the Devil being strong in him, and gave him bastinado on bastinado and buffet on buffet, which the poor colonel, being prostrate, suffered with a most Christian patience. The improbability of the fact never fails to raise mirth in the audience; and one may venture to answer for a British House of Commons, if we may guess from its conduct hitherto, that it will scarce be either so tame or so weak as our author supposes."

94 18. This is far from true. The pamphlets (there were in all four *Plebeians* and two *Old Whigs*) are for the most part purely argumentative; but Addison was the first to allude to the personality of his antagonist, and introduced an unnecessary fling at an unlucky business venture in which Steele had engaged. Steele's reply is neither undignified nor unkind.

95 1–13. This anecdote also is derived from Spence's conversations with Pope, and is therefore suspicious.

Gay, John (1685–1732), a plump, good-natured little bard, who made two clever hits in light opera, and enjoyed the warm friendship of Pope.

96 28. **The Jerusalem Chamber** is on the southwest side of Westminster Abbey, and is the meeting place of the Upper House of Convocation of the Province of Canterbury. It takes its name from the tapestries, worked with scenes from the history of Jerusalem, which formerly hung on its walls.

97 10–13. This praise is hardly merited. The piece has real feeling, but no remarkable power; and we have only to name such poems as *Lycidas*, *Adonais*, and *In Memoriam* to appreciate the distance by which it is removed from the work of the great poets.

98 7. *Spectator*, No. 72, and Nos. 584, 585.

ESSAY ON MILTON

PREFATORY NOTE.

To Professors Albert S. Cook, of Yale University, and George Lyman Kittredge, of Harvard, the thanks of the editor are due for their kindness in reading the notes to this little text-book while in proof, and for the aid of some timely suggestions and corrections.

INTRODUCTION.

Two questions confront at the outset the editor who attempts the preparation of a text-book, namely: What is the object of the pursuit of this study? and, By what means may that object be best attained?

English as a requirement for admission to college aims at two things. The first of these is that the pupil shall learn to write good English. The papers submitted at a college entrance examination soon reveal that among these aspirants for scholastic honors and the certificate of a liberal education there is at least a goodly sprinkling of youths whose work may almost be called illiterate. It is not merely feeble in thought and crude in expression; it is misspelled, unpunctuated, slovenly and illegible, and at times downright ungrammatical. No college instructor needs committees and reports to inform him of the presence of such men; but the newspapers and the outside world have lately been awakened to the actual condition of affairs, and the publication of self-condemning samples of undergraduate composition has aided powerfully in the agitation for more attention to English in the colleges and preparatory course. Boys who cannot spell nor write respectably, whose sentences do not parse, and whose written application for a position in a business office would be rejected on its own evidence of the unfitness of the applicant, had better, it is said, spend a little less time in the study of Greek and Latin, and a little more in learning not to violate the ordinary conventionalities and proprieties of expression in their own mother tongue.

But it is easy to say that boys are to be taught to write good English; to teach them that desirable art is a very different matter. For there is no better single test of the intellectual development and capacity of boy or man than his ability to write. If he writes well it is because he thinks well; he can no more write better than he thinks than water can rise above its source. He may, it is true, for a time write worse than he thinks; that is the loss by friction. But let him once conquer the difficulty of an unfamiliar avenue of expression and his writing measures him. If his thought is clear and vigorous, his vocabulary — indication of the range of his intellectual field — varied and under his control, his mind orderly and capable of grasping complex relations, then his style will be good; if, in addition, his imagination is quick and his feeling fine, he will add a higher quality of expression; while if his observation is imperfect, his memory weak, his ideas hazy, his mental processes slow and uncertain, and his grasp feeble, — so long as he is that kind of boy or man, no power on earth, or above it, can teach him to write.

If it is true that good writing means good thinking, if command and power of expression are simply the manifestation of command and power of thought, then the ability to write is the result of all education rather than something to be taught by itself. The justification of the introduction of English into the preparatory school is not at all that by its study boys may learn to write; nor is it a sufficient criticism of the old order of things to say that some college men are illiterate because they were not made to study English at school and pass an examination in English before entering college. If they write badly it is because their whole education was bad, and as a result their present mental development is inferior. If, notwithstanding that fact, they got into college and stay there, the explanation is that

notwithstanding their inferiority they are on the whole above the level at which their institution of learning will send them away. First divisions as a rule write well, no matter what they studied; it is the illiterate, reinforced by the lazy and the bad, who hang on the ragged edge. English — English worthy of the name — is to be taught, if it is to be taught at all, not because it teaches expression, but because it aids development; because the boy who devotes part of his time to the study of English classics is better educated, more mature or well rounded, than the boy who has given all his time to the study of Latin and Greek classics and mathematics.

A separate entrance requirement in English as a test of the candidate's ability to write may, by diverting our attention from the real issue, work positive harm. As a partial recognition of the importance of the ability it is a step in the right direction; but in so far as it implies that this ability is to be tested only by a single examination and developed by a particular line of study, it is altogether misleading. Inability to write is an impeachment of a school, not necessarily of a single master. It is inconceivable that a boy should be able to handle an involved periodic sentence on his Cæsar paper, if he be required, that is, genuinely to translate it, and not merely to give an inaccurate paraphrase, misnamed "free" translation, in which the display of a more or less loose knowledge of the vocabulary enables him to disguise his inability to comprehend the thought and construction — and then go to pieces when put to a fair test — when asked to write about a subject he understands — on his English paper. The pupil who learns to arrange his algebraic solution so that the eye may take in at a glance his process and results, whose demonstrations in geometry train him to be methodical, logical, and exact, is preparing for his English examination while he is master-

ing his mathematics. The truth is — as has already in effect been said — that the demand for better training in writing English in the preparatory schools is simply a demand for better preparation, for minds better disciplined and more fully developed. The logical conclusion is that the test of this must be applied, not in one subject, but in all. If the English test requires a maturity a year beyond that required in other subjects the candidate will not be kept out another year; he will get in — over the ruins of the barrier that the defeated English examiner attempted to defend.

Preparatory school English is in danger of seeking unassisted to accomplish too much. Its scope is so broad, the instruments which it puts into the hands of the skillful teacher are so various, that it may be made the means of disciplining almost any faculty of the mind. Through the opportunities which it affords for linguistic, rhetorical, and literary training, its study might almost answer for a universal education. But that it must not attempt. It must limit its field; it must seek out as its peculiar province that part of education which is comparatively neglected by the older studies, and which it is peculiarly qualified to accomplish.

It is to be hoped that it will not long continue to be held in popular opinion responsible for all the shortcomings of schoolboys and college students in the matter of written expression. Every preparatory school teacher must teach that — is teaching it all the time, whether efficiently or otherwise. Every written examination is an exercise in it; every translation influences it. Even the conventions and proprieties of written expression the violation of which constitutes illiteracy must be enforced in all departments if much is to be accomplished. A boy must not be permitted to misspell and ignore punctuation and use bad grammar with one instructor any more than with another.

The object of English as a preparatory study, then, is not to teach unaided and as its peculiar field the ability to write good English, though it has been said that the acquisition of this ability is one of the objects of the examination in English as a college entrance requirement. The other object aimed at by that requirement is that the pupil shall learn to like good books. And here we find the true and proper field of English teaching. Greek and Latin, formerly accepted without question as the peculiar instruments for the acquisition of liberal culture — the studies once called the humanities, have now partly been swamped by the growing importance of modern literature and history, and partly transformed by the influence of German scholarship and the scientific spirit, until they have become mainly the means of mental discipline and grammatical and linguistic drill. Parnassus is now climbed for the resulting benefit to muscles and sinews and lungs, and the ancient Pegasus labors among the dray-horses. It is the mantle fallen from the classics which English is now privileged to take up. To awaken and train a taste for good literature, to develop the æsthetic side of the youth, to sow the seeds of what may ripen into refinement and elegance and culture — here is the opportunity for English, and herein its high claim to a place in the established curriculum. Whether or no it can do this work better than the classics, were they taught by men of elegant scholarship and culture with this end in view, it is unnecessary to inquire. They are not ordinarily so taught; they do not attempt the work; and it is well to try English in their place.

How shall we teach boys to like good books? How educate and refine their taste? How teach culture? Knowledge can be taught; but culture? Appreciation, say some of our critics, is inborn; denied to some; in others a germ late fertilized, giving no sign of life until school days

are long past. Is not sensibility to beauty like sensibility to color, a matter of natural endowment?

It must be admitted that in the average schoolboy the æsthetic side of his nature is not highly developed. An English classic was defined at a recent meeting of teachers in New England as a work which the ordinary schoolboy will read with pleasure, and never forget. If by this is meant that he will attain to this laudable result unaided, either the commonly accepted list of English classics must suffer some wonderful expurgations or the ordinary schoolboy does not get to college. The writer does not recognize the type. He will frankly admit his inability in the case of a considerable part of a college Sophomore class to make them carry away anything more than an intellectual comprehension of *L'Allegro* — and even that impression so little permanent as to invest with substantial terrors for some of them the prospect of an examination six months away. It is not very difficult to interest college underclassmen in the *Faerie Queene;* but it is ordinarily for the story or the allegory rather than the Spenserian beauty of the language or the melody of the verse. Perhaps most of the boys who read the *Ancient Mariner* for the entrance examination were moved with a genuine appreciation of its poetry; but their papers would enrich a jest-book. It is idle to shut our eyes to the fact that intellectual curiosity and moral enthusiasm usually precede in the process of development the faculty of æsthetic appreciation.

The first and greatest obstacle in the way of the schoolboy's appreciation of literary style is the failure to comprehend the thought in all its fullness and suggestiveness. A happy epithet or poetic phrase must be caught by the eye and flashed through the mind before it can kindle the imagination. Rapid and superficial reading, mainly of fiction, and the diffuse abundance of the newspaper columns

have done their work, and the boy grasps mainly the nouns and verbs, taking in the main idea sufficiently to preserve the thread of the narrative, but without receiving any impression from the lesser words that contain the color and clothe the thought in beauty. Moreover, the artistic effectiveness of language is due not merely to what it directly says, but also to what it suggests. All words grow richer for us every day, from strengthened associations and the perception of a deeper meaning. The boy with his narrow experience and little depth of thought, finding it sufficiently difficult to grasp the first meaning, the denotation of the word, has neither mental energy nor richness of feeling to find more than a small part of what to the mature mind is really there.

As the deficiency is primarily an intellectual one, so the remedy is to be found in stimulating intellectual activity. The avenue to the feelings is through the chambers of the mind, whose doors are closed and barred. But rightly touched, they open easily enough. Curiosity is as natural to the healthy boy's mind as hunger to his body. Æsthetic feeling, it is true, we cannot directly teach; we cannot make the blind see; but we may draw the curtains from the window and bid the child look out. Most boys have not had their eyes opened, that is all.

English in the schools is a subject to be studied, not read merely. The average schoolboy is incapable undirected of reading aright. He must learn a new method. He must try so far as possible to notice every word, to follow out every allusion, to leave nothing behind him that he does not understand. There is, of course, the danger that under a wooden and injudicious teacher the work may become mechanical and irksome; but in no subject is there less excuse for this than in English. Dull work is hard work; but hard work need not be dull. The teacher who cannot

get more work and more willing work and more effective work out of his pupils in English than in anything else has mistaken his profession.

English is the study above all others which must set the pupil to thinking. Thoughtfulness one would expect to find the supreme and distinguishing characteristic of a college community. The thoughtful attitude of mind may in a sense be called the test of a liberal education. Yet it is astonishing how many men live for four years within college walls and receive their degrees at the end who have never learned to think for themselves, and how little it is true that the college atmosphere is necessarily a thoughtful atmosphere. Opinions are too often the result of environment, of inherited principles and prejudices, credulously accepted and blindly defended. Many men are afraid to think; it is uncomfortable business, and leads no one knows whither; better rest satisfied with the opinions and principles and beliefs of other good respectable people; otherwise you will probably become a crank. Now if a man has not attained to the thoughtful attitude of mind — has not learned to observe and ponder and judge for himself, and to be fond of thinking, before he leaves college, it is not likely that he will ever learn afterward. But it is not necessary that he should wait until he gets to college before he begins to learn. The boy who is interested in books and reads along general lines will grow into the thoughtful, the broadly and truly educated man. The teacher who makes his pupils thoughtful confers upon them the greatest benefit in the teacher's power to bestow. And what for this purpose can compare with English in the opportunity that it gives? It is the gateway to a whole new world — the world of ideas, the world in which one escapes from pettiness, and vulgarity, and prejudice, and enters the freemasonry of high and noble society. Not

that it is by any means the only gateway; but the preparatory school teacher of English is dealing more directly with thought in its application to life, and with far greater variety and range of thought, than the teacher of any other subject. Literature covers the whole range of unspecialized human activity. Its field is nature and life. Novels, essays, poems to be taught, their thought to be made the thought of the pupil, and all the wealth of illustration and figure and suggestion to be explored — how can literature be taught without teaching the pupil to think?

The experienced and skillful master will need no directions how to make effective a subject so rich with opportunity. But the introduction of English into the college requirements is so recent that it has not found a method agreed upon in general outline by all teachers; each must find his way for himself, and often lose precious time in experiment. There is a danger which confronts editor and teacher alike. It is that he may do too much of the work which the pupil, if he is to receive the benefit, must do himself. If the pupil is to learn to think he must form opinions, not learn them. At every step, it is true, questions rise before him which he cannot settle definitely and finally for himself for years; perhaps can never settle; yet he ought to be thinking about them. His curiosity is continually to be stimulated and awakened, not satisfied and put to sleep. He should be taught the use of books of reference, too, that he may not be helpless when reading by himself with texts unannotated for the convenience of laziness and an examination cram. And on the other hand, it is unnecessary to discuss the question whether it would be profitable to require the pupil to hunt down every allusion for himself, since it is manifestly impossible for him to do so and cover the ground which the college entrance requirement demands. His master or his notes

must often tell him what he needs to know to understand his text, not merely tell him where to look to find that knowledge for himself.

It has been the editor's effort in preparing this little pamphlet to keep in view the practical necessities of the case, while at the same time avoiding the Charybdis of that most detestable of pseudo-educational works — a device for enabling pupils to cram sufficient unassimilated knowledge to enable them, with the smallest possible expenditure of energy and time, to pass a given examination. Much has been left for the boy or girl to do, and much for the discretion of the teacher to select, expand, or omit. There is no pretence of having exhausted the possibilities of the essay; it has been attempted only to suggest some of the ways in which it may be employed for the kind of teaching which the requirement of English for the college entrance examinations was intended to demand.

YALE UNIVERSITY,
March, 1896.

MILTON.

(*EDINBURGH REVIEW, AUGUST, 1825.*)

Joannis Miltoni, Angli, de Doctrinâ Christianâ libri duo posthumi. A Treatise on Christian Doctrine, compiled from the Holy Scriptures alone. By JOHN MILTON, translated from the Original by Charles R. Sumner, M.A., etc., etc.: 1825.

TOWARD the close of the year 1823, Mr. Lemon, deputy keeper of the state-papers, in the course of his researches among the presses of his office, met with a large Latin manuscript. With it were found corrected copies of the foreign despatches written by Milton while he filled the office of Secretary, and several papers relating to the Popish Trials and the Rye-house Plot. The whole was wrapped up in an envelope, superscribed *To Mr. Skinner, Merchant.* On examination, the large manuscript proved to be the long lost essay on the doctrines of Christianity, which, according to Wood and Toland, Milton finished after the Restoration, and deposited with Cyriac Skinner. Skinner, it is well known, held the same political opinions with his illustrious friend. It is therefore probable, as Mr. Lemon conjectures, that he may have fallen under the suspicions of the Government during that persecution of the Whigs which followed the dissolution of the Oxford Parliament, and that, in consequence of a general seizure of his papers, this work may have been brought to the office in which it has been found. But whatever the adventures of the manuscript may have been, no doubt can exist that it is a genuine relic of the great poet.

Mr. Sumner, who was commanded by his majesty to edit and translate the treatise, has acquitted himself of his task in a manner honorable to his talents and to his character. His version is not indeed very easy or elegant; but it is entitled to the praise of clearness and fidelity. His notes abound with interesting quotations, and have the rare merit of really elucidating the text. The preface is evidently the work of a sensible and candid man, firm in his own religious opinions, and tolerant toward those of others.

The book itself will not add much to the fame of Milton. It is, like all his Latin works, well written, though not exactly in the style of the prize essays of Oxford and Cambridge. There is no elaborate imitation of classical antiquity, no scrupulous purity, none of the ceremonial cleanness which characterizes the diction of our academical Pharisees. The author does not attempt to polish and brighten his composition into the Ciceronian gloss and brilliancy. He does not, in short, sacrifice sense and spirit to pedantic refinements. The nature of his subject compelled him to use many words

"That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp."

But he writes with as much ease and freedom as if Latin were his mother-tongue; and, where he is least happy, his failure seems to rise from the carelessness of a native, not from the ignorance of a foreigner. We may apply to him what Denham with great felicity says of Cowley. He wears the garb, but not the clothes, of the ancients.

Throughout the volume are discernible the traces of a powerful and independent mind, emancipated from the influence of authority, and devoted to the search of truth. Milton professes to form his system from the Bible alone; and his digest of Scriptural texts is certainly among the

best that have appeared. But he is not always so happy in his inferences as in his citations.

Some of the heterodox doctrines which he avows seemed to have excited considerable amazement, particularly his Arianism, and his theory on the subject of polygamy. Yet we can scarcely conceive that any person could have read the *Paradise Lost* without suspecting him of the former; nor do we think that any reader acquainted with the history of his life ought to be much startled at the latter. The opinions which he has expressed respecting the nature of the Deity, the eternity of matter, and the observation of the Sabbath, might, we think, have caused more just surprise.

But we will not go into the discussion of these points. The book, were it far more orthodox or far more heretical than it is, would not much edify or corrupt the present generation. The men of our time are not to be converted or perverted by quartos. A few more days, and this essay will follow the *Defensio Populi* to the dust and silence of the upper shelf. The name of its author, and the remarkable circumstances attending its publication, will secure to it a certain degree of attention. For a month or two it will occupy a few minutes of chat in every drawing-room, and a few columns in every magazine; and it will then, to borrow the elegant language of the play-bills, be withdrawn, to make room for the forthcoming novelties.

We wish, however, to avail ourselves of the interest, transient as it may be, which this work has excited. The dexterous Capuchins never choose to preach on the life and miracles of a saint till they have awakened the devotional feelings of their auditors by exhibiting some relic of him — a thread of his garment, a lock of his hair, or a drop of his blood. On the same principle, we intend to

take advantage of the late interesting discovery, and, while this memorial of a great and good man is still in the hands of all, to say something of his moral and intellectual qualities. Nor, we are convinced, will the severest of our readers blame us if, on an occasion like the present, we turn for a short time from the topics of the day to commemorate, in all love and reverence, the genius and virtues of John Milton, the poet, the statesman, the philosopher, the glory of English literature, the champion and the martyr of English liberty.

It is by his poetry that Milton is best known; and it is of his poetry that we wish first to speak. By the general suffrage of the civilized world, his place has been assigned among the greatest masters of the art. His detractors, however, though outvoted, have not been silenced. There are many critics, and some of great name, who contrive in the same breath to extol the poems and to decry the poet. The works, they acknowledge, considered in themselves, may be classed among the noblest productions of the human mind. But they will not allow the author to rank with those great men who, born in the infancy of civilization, supplied, by their own powers, the want of instruction, and, though destitute of models themselves, bequeathed to posterity models which defy imitation. Milton, it is said, inherited what his predecessors created; he lived in an enlightened age; he received a finished education; and we must therefore, if we would form a just estimate of his powers, make large deductions in consideration of these advantages.

We venture to say, on the contrary, paradoxical as the remark may appear, that no poet has ever had to struggle with more unfavorable circumstances than Milton. He doubted, as he has himself owned, whether he had not been born "an age too late." For this notion Johnson

has thought fit to make him the butt of much clumsy ridicule. The poet, we believe, understood the nature of his art better than the critic. He knew that his poetical genius derived no advantage from the civilization which surrounded him, or from the learning which he had acquired; and he looked back with something like regret to the ruder age of simple words and vivid impressions.

We think that, as civilization advances, poetry almost necessarily declines. Therefore, though we fervently admire those great works of imagination which have appeared in dark ages, we do not admire them the more because they have appeared in dark ages. On the contrary, we hold that the most wonderful and splendid proof of genius is a great poem produced in a civilized age. We cannot understand why those who believe in that most orthodox article of literary faith, that the earliest poets are generally the best, should wonder at the rule as if it were the exception. Surely the uniformity of the phenomenon indicates a corresponding uniformity in the cause.

The fact is, that common observers reason from the progress of the experimental sciences to that of the imitative arts. The improvement of the former is gradual and slow. Ages are spent in collecting materials, ages more in separating and combining them. Even when a system has been formed, there is still something to add, to alter, or to reject. Every generation enjoys the use of a vast hoard bequeathed to it by antiquity, and transmits that hoard, augmented by fresh acquisitions, to future ages. In these pursuits, therefore, the first speculators lie under great disadvantages, and, even when they fail, are entitled to praise. Their pupils, with far inferior intellectual powers, speedily surpass them in actual attainments. Every girl who has read Mrs. Marcet's little

dialogues on political economy could teach Montague or Walpole many lessons in finance. Any intelligent man may now, by resolutely applying himself for a few years to mathematics, learn more than the great Newton knew after half a century of study and meditation.

But it is not thus with music, with painting, or with sculpture. Still less is it thus with poetry. The progress of refinement rarely supplies these arts with better objects of imitation. It may indeed improve the instruments which are necessary to the mechanical operations of the musician, the sculptor, and the painter. But language, the machine of the poet, is best fitted for his purpose in its rudest state. Nations, like individuals, first perceive, and then abstract. They advance from particular images to general terms. Hence the vocabulary of an enlightened society is philosophical, that of a half-civilized people is poetical.

This change in the language of men is partly the cause and partly the effect of a corresponding change in the nature of their intellectual operations, of a change by which science gains and poetry loses. Generalization is necessary to the advancement of knowledge; but particularity is indispensable to the creations of the imagination. In proportion as men know more and think more, they look less at individuals and more at classes. They therefore make better theories and worse poems. They give us vague phrases instead of images, and personified qualities instead of men. They may be better able to analyze human nature than their predecessors. But analysis is not the business of the poet. His office is to portray, not to dissect. He may believe in a moral sense, like Shaftesbury; he may refer all human actions to self-interest, like Helvetius; or he may never think about the matter at all. His creed on such subjects will no

more influence his poetry, properly so called, than the notions which a painter may have conceived respecting the lachrymal glands, or the circulation of the blood, will affect the tears of his Niobe, or the blushes of his Aurora. If Shakspeare had written a book on the motives of human actions, it is by no means certain that it would have been a good one. It is extremely improbable that it would have contained half so much able reasoning on the subject as is to be found in the Fable of the Bees. But could Mandeville have created an Iago? Well as he knew how to resolve characters into their elements, would he have been able to combine those elements in such a manner as to make up a man — a real, living, individual man?

Perhaps no person can be a poet, or can even enjoy poetry, without a certain unsoundness of mind, if anything which gives so much pleasure ought to be called unsoundness. By poetry we mean not all writing in verse, nor even all good writing in verse. Our definition excludes many metrical compositions which, on other grounds, deserve the highest praise. By poetry we mean the art of employing words in such a manner as to produce an illusion on the imagination, the art of doing by means of words what the painter does by means of colors. Thus the greatest of poets has described it, in lines universally admired for the vigor and felicity of their diction, and still more valuable on account of the just notion which they convey of the art in which he excelled:

> "As imagination bodies forth
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
> Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name."

These are the fruits of the "fine frenzy" which he ascribes to the poet — a fine frenzy, doubtless, but still a frenzy. Truth, indeed, is essential to poetry; but it is

the truth of madness. The reasonings are just; but the premises are false. After the first suppositions have been made, everything ought to be consistent; but those first suppositions require a degree of credulity which almost amounts to a partial and temporary derangement of the intellect. Hence of all people children are the most imaginative. They abandon themselves without reserve to every illusion. Every image which is strongly presented to their mental eye produces on them the effect of reality. No man, whatever his sensibility may be, is ever affected by *Hamlet* or *Lear* as a little girl is affected by the story of poor Red Riding-hood. She knows that it is all false, that wolves cannot speak, that there are no wolves in England. Yet, in spite of her knowledge, she believes; she weeps; she trembles; she dares not go into a dark room lest she should feel the teeth of the monster at her throat. Such is the despotism of the imagination over uncultivated minds.

In a rude state of society, men are children with a greater variety of ideas. It is therefore in such a state of society that we may expect to find the poetical temperament in its highest perfection. In an enlightened age there will be much intelligence, much science, much philosophy, abundance of just classification and subtle analysis, abundance of wit and eloquence, abundance of verses, and even of good ones; but little poetry. Men will judge and compare; but they will not create. They will talk about the old poets, and comment on them, and to a certain degree enjoy them. But they will scarcely be able to conceive the effect which poetry produced on their ruder ancestors, the agony, the ecstasy, the plenitude of belief. The Greek rhapsodists, according to Plato, could scarce recite Homer without falling into convulsions. The Mohawk hardly feels the scalping-

knife while he shouts his death-song. The power which the ancient bards of Wales and Germany exercised over their auditors seems to modern readers almost miraculous. Such feelings are very rare in a civilized community, and most rare among those who participate most in its improvements. They linger longest among the peasantry.

Poetry produces an illusion on the eye of the mind, as a magic lantern produces an illusion on the eye of the body. And, as the magic lantern acts best in a dark room, poetry effects its purpose most completely in a dark age. As the light of knowledge breaks in upon its exhibitions, as the outlines of certainty become more and more definite, and the shades of probability more and more distinct, the hues and lineaments of the phantoms which the poet calls up grow fainter and fainter. We cannot unite the incompatible advantages of reality and deception, the clear discernment of truth and the exquisite enjoyment of fiction.

He who, in an enlightened and literary society, aspires to be a great poet, must first become a little child. He must take to pieces the whole web of his mind. He must unlearn much of that knowledge which has perhaps constituted hitherto his chief title to superiority. His very talents will be a hinderance to him. His difficulties will be proportioned to his proficiency in the pursuits which are fashionable among his contemporaries; and that proficiency will in general be proportioned to the vigor and activity of his mind. And it is well if, after all his sacrifices and exertions, his works do not resemble a lisping man or a modern ruin. We have seen in our own time great talents, intense labor, and long meditation employed in this struggle against the spirit of the age, and employed, we will not say absolutely in vain, but with dubious success and feeble applause.

If these reasonings be just, no poet has ever triumphed over greater difficulties than Milton. He received a learned education: he was a profound and elegant classical scholar: he had studied all the mysteries of rabbinical literature: he was intimately acquainted with every language in modern Europe from which either pleasure or information was then to be derived. He was perhaps the only poet of later times who has been distinguished by the excellence of his Latin verse. The genius of Petrarch was scarcely of the first order; and his poems in the ancient language, though much praised by those who have never read them, are wretched compositions. Cowley, with all his admirable wit and ingenuity, had little imagination: nor, indeed, do we think his classical diction comparable to that of Milton. The authority of Johnson is against us on this point. But Johnson had studied the bad writers of the Middle Ages till he had become utterly insensible to the Augustan elegance, and was as ill qualified to judge between two Latin styles as an habitual drunkard to set up for a wine-taster.

Versification in a dead language is an exotic, a far-fetched, costly, sickly imitation of that which elsewhere may be found in healthful and spontaneous perfection. The soils on which this rarity flourishes are in general as ill suited to the production of vigorous native poetry as the flower-pots of a hot-house to the growth of oaks. That the author of the *Paradise Lost* should have written the epistle to Manso was truly wonderful. Never before were such marked originality and such exquisite mimicry found together. Indeed, in all the Latin poems of Milton the artificial manner indispensable to such works is admirably preserved, while, at the same time, his genius gives to them a peculiar charm, an air of nobleness and freedom, which distinguishes them from all other writings

of the same class. They remind us of the amusements of those angelic warriors who composed the cohort of Gabriel:

> "About him exercised heroic games
> The unarmed youth of heaven. But o'er their heads
> Celestial armory, shield, helm, and spear,
> Hung high, with diamond flaming and with gold."

We cannot look upon the sportive exercises for which the genius of Milton ungirds itself without catching a glimpse of the gorgeous and terrible panoply which it is accustomed to wear. The strength of his imagination triumphed over every obstacle. So intense and ardent was the fire of his mind, that it not only was not suffocated beneath the weight of fuel, but penetrated the whole superincumbent mass with its own heat and radiance.

It is not our intention to attempt anything like a complete examination of the poetry of Milton. The public has long been agreed as to the merit of the most remarkable passages, the incomparable harmony of the numbers, and the excellence of that style which no rival has been able to equal and no parodist to degrade; which displays in their highest perfection the idiomatic powers of the English tongue, and to which every ancient and every modern language has contributed something of grace, of energy, or of music. In the vast field of criticism on which we are entering, innumerable reapers have already put their sickles. Yet the harvest is so abundant that the negligent search of a straggling gleaner may be rewarded with a sheaf.

The most striking characteristic of the poetry of Milton is the extreme remoteness of the associations by means of which it acts on the reader. Its effect is produced, not so much by what it expresses, as by what it suggests;

not so much by the ideas which it directly conveys, as by other ideas which are connected with them. He electrifies the mind through conductors. The most unimaginative man must understand the *Iliad*. Homer gives him no choice, and requires from him no exertion, but takes the whole upon himself, and sets the images in so clear a light that it is impossible to be blind to them. The works of Milton cannot be comprehended or enjoyed unless the mind of the reader co-operate with that of the writer. He does not paint a finished picture, or play for a mere passive listener. He sketches, and leaves others to fill up the outline. He strikes the key-note, and expects his hearer to make out the melody.

We often hear of the magical influence of poetry. The expression in general means nothing; but, applied to the writings of Milton, it is most appropriate. His poetry acts like an incantation. Its merit lies less in its obvious meaning than in its occult power. There would seem, at first sight, to be no more in his words than in other words. But they are words of enchantment. No sooner are they pronounced, than the past is present and the distant near. New forms of beauty start at once into existence, and all the burial-places of the memory give up their dead. Change the structure of the sentence; substitute one synonyme for another, and the whole effect is destroyed. The spell loses its power; and he who should then hope to conjure with it would find himself as much mistaken as Cassim in the Arabian tale, when he stood crying "Open Wheat," "Open Barley," to the door that obeyed no sound but "Open Sesame." The miserable failure of Dryden in his attempt to translate into his own diction some parts of the *Paradise Lost* is a remarkable instance of this.

In support of these observations, we may remark that scarcely any passages in the poems of Milton are more generally known or more frequently repeated than those which are little more than muster-rolls of names. They are not always more appropriate or more melodious than other names. But they are charmed names. Every one of them is the first link in a long chain of associated ideas. Like the dwelling-place of our infancy revisited in manhood, like the song of our country heard in a strange land, they produce upon us an effect wholly independent of their intrinsic value. One transports us back to a remote period of history. Another places us among the novel scenes and manners of a distant region. A third evokes all the dear classical recollections of childhood, the school-room, the dog-eared Virgil, the holiday, and the prize. A fourth brings before us the splendid phantoms of chivalrous romance, the trophied lists, the embroidered housings, the quaint devices, the haunted forests, the enchanted gardens, the achievements of enamored knights, and the smiles of rescued princesses.

In none of the works of Milton is his peculiar manner more happily displayed than in the *Allegro* and the *Penseroso*. It is impossible to conceive that the mechanism of language can be brought to a more exquisite degree of perfection. These poems differ from others as ottar of roses differs from ordinary rose-water, the close-packed essence from the thin, diluted mixture. They are, indeed, not so much poems as collections of hints, from each of which the reader is to make out a poem for himself. Every epithet is a text for a stanza.

The *Comus* and the *Samson Agonistes* are works which, though of very different merit, offer some marked points of resemblance. Both are lyric poems in the form of plays. There are perhaps no two kinds of composition

so essentially dissimilar as the drama and the ode. The business of the dramatist is to keep himself out of sight, and to let nothing appear but his characters. As soon as he attracts notice to his personal feelings, the illusion is broken. The effect is as unpleasant as that which is produced on the stage by the voice of a prompter or the entrance of a scene-shifter. Hence it was that the tragedies of Byron were his least successful performances. They resemble those pasteboard pictures invented by the friend of children, Mr. Newbery, in which a single movable head goes round twenty different bodies, so that the same face looks out upon us successively, from the uniform of a hussar, the furs of a judge, and the rags of a beggar. In all the characters, patriots and tyrants, haters and lovers, the frown and sneer of Harold were discernible in an instant. But this species of egotism, though fatal to the drama, is the inspiration of the ode. It is the part of the lyric poet to abandon himself, without reserve, to his own emotions.

Between these hostile elements many great men have endeavored to effect an amalgamation, but never with complete success. The Greek drama, on the model of which the *Samson* was written, sprang from the ode. The dialogue was ingrafted on the chorus, and naturally partook of its character. The genius of the greatest of the Athenian dramatists co-operated with the circumstances under which tragedy made its first appearance. Æschylus was, head and heart, a lyric poet. In his time, the Greeks had far more intercourse with the East than in the days of Homer; and they had not yet acquired that immense superiority in war, in science, and in the arts, which, in the following generation, led them to treat the Asiatics with contempt. From the narrative of Herodotus it should seem that they still looked up, with

the veneration of disciples, to Egypt and Assyria. At this period, accordingly, it was natural that the literature of Greece should be tinctured with the Oriental style. And that style, we think, is discernible in the works of Pindar and Æschylus. The latter often reminds us of the Hebrew writers. The Book of Job, indeed, in conduct and diction, bears a considerable resemblance to some of his dramas. Considered as plays, his works are absurd; considered as choruses, they are above all praise. If, for instance, we examine the address of Clytæmnestra to Agamemnon on his return, or the description of the seven Argive chiefs, by the principles of dramatic writing, we shall instantly condemn them as monstrous. But if we forget the characters, and think only of the poetry, we shall admit that it has never been surpassed in energy and magnificence. Sophocles made the Greek drama as dramatic as was consistent with its original form. His portraits of men have a sort of similarity; but it is the similarity, not of a painting, but of a bass-relief. It suggests a resemblance; but it does not produce an illusion. Euripides attempted to carry the reform further. But it was a task far beyond his powers, perhaps beyond any powers. Instead of correcting what was bad, he destroyed what was excellent. He substituted crutches for stilts, bad sermons for good odes.

Milton, it is well known, admired Euripides highly, much more highly than, in our opinion, Euripides deserved. Indeed, the caresses which this partiality leads our countryman to bestow on "sad Electra's poet" sometimes remind us of the beautiful Queen of Fairy-land kissing the long ears of Bottom. At all events, there can be no doubt that this veneration for the Athenian, whether just or not, was injurious to the *Samson Agonistes*. Had Milton taken Æschylus for his model, he would have

given himself up to the lyric inspiration, and poured out profusely all the treasures of his mind, without bestowing a thought on those dramatic proprieties which the nature of the work rendered it impossible to preserve. In the attempt to reconcile things in their own nature inconsistent he has failed, as every one else must have failed. We cannot identify ourselves with the characters, as in a good play. We cannot identify ourselves with the poet, as in a good ode. The conflicting ingredients, like an acid and an alkali mixed, neutralize each other. We are by no means insensible to the merits of this celebrated piece, to the severe dignity of the style, the graceful and pathetic solemnity of the opening speech, or the wild and barbaric melody which gives so striking an effect to the choral passages. But we think it, we confess, the least successful effort of the genius of Milton.

The *Comus* is framed on the model of the Italian Masque, as the *Samson* is framed on the model of the Greek Tragedy. It is certainly the noblest performance of the kind which exists in any language. It is as far superior to *The Faithful Shepherdess*, as *The Faithful Shepherdess* is to the *Aminta*, or the *Aminta* to the *Pastor Fido*. It was well for Milton that he had here no Euripides to mislead him. He understood and loved the literature of modern Italy. But he did not feel for it the same veneration which he entertained for the remains of Athenian and Roman poetry, consecrated by so many lofty and endearing recollections. The faults, moreover, of his Italian predecessors were of a kind to which his mind had a deadly antipathy. He could stoop to a plain style, sometimes even to a bald style; but false brilliancy was his utter aversion. His muse had no objection to a russet attire; but she turned with disgust from the finery of Guarini, as tawdry and as

paltry as the rags of a chimney-sweeper on May-day. Whatever ornaments she wears are of massive gold, not only dazzling to the sight, but capable of standing the severest test of the crucible.

Milton attended in the *Comus* to the distinction which he afterward neglected in the *Samson*. He made his *Masque* what it ought to be, essentially lyrical, and dramatic only in semblance. He has not attempted a fruitless struggle against a defect inherent in the nature of that species of composition; and he has therefore succeeded, wherever success was not impossible. The speeches must be read as majestic soliloquies; and he who so reads them will be enraptured with their eloquence, their sublimity, and their music. The interruptions of the dialogue, however, impose a constraint upon the writer, and break the illusion of the reader. The finest passages are those which are lyric in form as well as in spirit. "I should much commend," says the excellent Sir Henry Wotton in a letter to Milton, "the tragical part if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain Dorique delicacy in your songs and odes, whereunto, I must plainly confess to you, I have seen yet nothing parallel in our language." The criticism was just. It is when Milton escapes from the shackles of the dialogue, when he is discharged from the labor of uniting two incongruous styles, when he is at liberty to indulge his choral raptures without reserve, that he rises even above himself. Then, like his own good Genius bursting from the earthly form and weeds of Thyrsis, he stands forth in celestial freedom and beauty; he seems to cry exultingly,

> "Now my task is smoothly done,
> I can fly or I can run,"

to skim the earth, to soar above the clouds, to bathe

in the Elysian dew of the rainbow, and to inhale the balmy smells of nard and cassia, which the musky winds of the zephyr scatter through the cedared alleys of the Hesperides.

There are several of the minor poems of Milton on which we would willingly make a few remarks. Still more willingly would we enter into a detailed examination of that admirable poem, the *Paradise Regained*, which, strangely enough, is scarcely ever mentioned except as an instance of the blindness of the parental affection which men of letters bear toward the offspring of their intellects. That Milton was mistaken in preferring this work, excellent as it is, to the *Paradise Lost*, we readily admit. But we are sure that the superiority of the *Paradise Lost* to the *Paradise Regained* is not more decided than the superiority of the *Paradise Regained* to every poem which has since made its appearance. Our limits, however, prevent us from discussing the point at length. We hasten on to that extraordinary production which the general suffrage of critics has placed in the highest class of human compositions.

The only poem of modern times which can be compared with the *Paradise Lost* is the *Divine Comedy*. The subject of Milton, in some points, resembled that of Dante; but he has treated it in a widely different manner. We cannot, we think, better illustrate our opinion respecting our own great poet than by contrasting him with the father of Tuscan literature.

The poetry of Milton differs from that of Dante as the hieroglyphics of Egypt differed from the picture-writing of Mexico. The images which Dante employs speak for themselves; they stand simply for what they are. Those of Milton have a signification which is often discernible only to the initiated. Their value depends

less on what they directly represent than on what they remotely suggest. However strange, however grotesque, may be the appearance which Dante undertakes to describe, he never shrinks from describing it. He gives us the shape, the color, the sound, the smell, the taste; he counts the numbers; he measures the size. His similes are the illustrations of a traveller. Unlike those of other poets, and especially of Milton, they are introduced in a plain, business-like manner; not for the sake of any beauty in the objects from which they are drawn; not for the sake of any ornament which they may impart to the poem; but simply in order to make the meaning of the writer as clear to the reader as it is to himself. The ruins of the precipice which led from the sixth to the seventh circle of hell were like those of the rock which fell into the Adige on the south of Trent. The cataract of Phlegethon was like that of Aqua Cheta at the Monastery of St. Benedict. The place where the heretics were confined in burning tombs resembled the vast cemetery of Arles.

Now let us compare with the exact details of Dante the dim intimations of Milton. We will cite a few examples. The English poet has never thought of taking the measure of Satan. He gives us merely a vague idea of vast bulk. In one passage the fiend lies stretched out huge in length, floating many a rood, equal in size to the earth-born enemies of Jove, or to the sea-monster which the mariner mistakes for an island. When he addresses himself to battle against the guardian angels he stands like Teneriffe or Atlas: his stature reaches the sky. Contrast with these descriptions the lines in which Dante has described the gigantic spectre of Nimrod. "His face seemed to me as long and as broad as the ball of St. Peter's at Rome; and his other limbs

were in proportion; so that the bank, which concealed him from the waist downwards, nevertheless showed so much of him that three tall Germans would in vain have attempted to reach to his hair." We are sensible that we do no justice to the admirable style of the Florentine poet. But Mr. Cary's translation is not at hand; and our version, however rude, is sufficient to illustrate our meaning.

Once more, compare the lazar-house in the eleventh book of the *Paradise Lost* with the last ward of Malebolge in Dante. Milton avoids the loathsome details, and takes refuge in indistinct but solemn and tremendous imagery — Despair hurrying from couch to couch to mock the wretches with his attendance, Death shaking his dart over them, but, in spite of supplications, delaying to strike. What says Dante? "There was such a moan there as there would be if all the sick who, between July and September, are in the hospitals of Valdichiana, and of the Tuscan swamps, and of Sardinia, were in one pit together; and such a stench was issuing forth as is wont to issue from decayed limbs."

We will not take upon ourselves the invidious office of settling precedency between two such writers. Each in his own department is incomparable; and each, we may remark, has wisely, or fortunately, taken a subject adapted to exhibit his peculiar talent to the greatest advantage. The *Divine Comedy* is a personal narrative. Dante is the eye-witness and ear-witness of that which he relates. He is the very man who has heard the tormented spirits crying out for the second death, who has read the dusky characters on the portal within which there is no hope, who has hidden his face from the terrors of the Gorgon, who has fled from the hooks and the seething pitch of Barbariccia and Draghignazzo.

His own hands have grasped the shaggy sides of Lucifer. His own feet have climbed the mountain of expiation. His own brow has been marked by the purifying angel. The reader would throw aside such a tale in incredulous disgust, unless it were told with the strongest air of veracity, with a sobriety even in its horrors, with the greatest precision and multiplicity in its details. The narrative of Milton in this respect differs from that of Dante as the adventures of Amadis differ from those of Gulliver. The author of *Amadis* would have made his book ridiculous if he had introduced those minute particulars which give such a charm to the work of Swift, the nautical observations, the affected delicacy about names, the official documents transcribed at full length, and all the unmeaning gossip and scandal of the court, springing out of nothing, and tending to nothing. We are not shocked at being told that a man who lived, nobody knows when, saw many very strange sights, and we can easily abandon ourselves to the illusion of the romance. But when Lemuel Gulliver, surgeon, resident at Rotherhithe, tells us of pigmies and giants, flying islands, and philosophizing horses, nothing but such circumstantial touches could produce for a single moment a deception on the imagination.

Of all the poets who have introduced into their works the agency of supernatural beings, Milton has succeeded best. Here Dante decidedly yields to him: and as this is a point on which many rash and ill-considered judgments have been pronounced, we feel inclined to dwell on it a little longer. The most fatal error which a poet can possibly commit in the management of his machinery is that of attempting to philosophize too much. Milton has been often censured for ascribing to spirits many functions of which spirits must be incapable. But

these objections, though sanctioned by eminent names, originate, we venture to say, in profound ignorance of the art of poetry.

What is spirit? What are our own minds, the portion of spirit with which we are best acquainted? We observe certain phenomena. We cannot explain them into material causes. We therefore infer that there exists something which is not material. But of this something we have no idea. We can define it only by negatives. We can reason about it only by symbols. We use the word, but we have no image of the thing; and the business of poetry is with images, and not with words. The poet uses words, indeed; but they are merely the instruments of his art, not its objects. They are the materials which he is to dispose in such a manner as to present a picture to the mental eye. And if they are not so disposed, they are no more entitled to be called poetry than a bale of canvas and a box of colors to be called a painting.

Logicians may reason about abstractions. But the great mass of men must have images. The strong tendency of the multitude in all ages and nations to idolatry can be explained on no other principle. The first inhabitants of Greece, there is reason to believe, worshipped one invisible Deity. But the necessity of having something more definite to adore produced, in a few centuries, the innumerable crowd of gods and goddesses. In like manner the ancient Persians thought it impious to exhibit the creator under a human form. Yet even these transferred to the sun the worship which, in speculation, they considered due only to the Supreme Mind. The history of the Jews is the record of a continued struggle between pure Theism, supported by the mort terrible sanctions, and the strangely fascinating

desire of having some visible and tangible object of adoration. Perhaps none of the secondary causes which Gibbon has assigned for the rapidity with which Christianity spread over the world, while Judaism scarcely ever acquired a proselyte, operated more powerfully than this feeling. God, the uncreated, the incomprehensible, the invisible, attracted few worshippers. A philosopher might admire so noble a conception; but the crowd turned away in disgust from words which presented no image to their minds. It was before Deity embodied in a human form, walking among men, partaking of their infirmities, leaning on their bosoms, weeping over their graves, slumbering in the manger, bleeding on the cross, that the prejudices of the Synagogue, and the doubts of the Academy, and the pride of the Portico, and the fasces of the Lictor, and the swords of thirty legions, were humbled in the dust. Soon after Christianity had achieved its triumph, the principle which had assisted it began to corrupt it. It became a new paganism. Patron saints assumed the offices of household gods. St. George took the place of Mars. St. Elmo consoled the mariner for the loss of Castor and Pollux. The Virgin Mother and Cecilia succeeded to Venus and the Muses. The fascination of sex and loveliness was again joined to that of celestial dignity; and the homage of chivalry was blended with that of religion. Reformers have often made a stand against these feelings; but never with more than apparent and partial success. The men who demolished the images in cathedrals have not always been able to demolish those which were enshrined in their minds. It would not be difficult to show that in politics the same rule holds good. Doctrines, we are afraid, must generally be embodied before they can excite a strong public feeling. The multitude is more

easily interested for the most unmeaning badge, or the most insignificant name, than for the most important principle.

From these considerations, we infer that no poet who should affect that metaphysical accuracy for the want of which Milton has been blamed would escape a disgraceful failure. Still, however, there was another extreme which, though far less dangerous, was also to be avoided. The imaginations of men are in a great measure under the control of their opinions. The most exquisite art of poetical coloring can produce no illusion when it is employed to represent that which is at once perceived to be incongruous and absurd. Milton wrote in an age of philosophers and theologians. It was necessary, therefore, for him to abstain from giving such a shock to their understandings as might break the charm which it was his object to throw over their imaginations. This is the real explanation of the indistinctness and inconsistency with which which he has often been reproached. Dr. Johnson acknowledges that it was absolutely necessary that the spirit should be clothed with material forms. "But," says he, "the poet should have secured the consistency of his system by keeping immateriality out of sight, and seducing the reader to drop it from his thoughts." This is easily said; but what if Milton could not seduce his readers to drop immateriality from their thoughts? What if the contrary opinion had taken so full a possession of the minds of men as to leave no room even for the half-belief which poetry requires? Such we suspect to have been the case. It was impossible for the poet to adopt altogether the material or the immaterial system. He therefore took his stand on the debatable ground. He left the whole in ambiguity. He has doubtless, by

so doing, laid himself open to the charge of inconsistency. But, though philosophically in the wrong, we cannot but believe that he was poetically in the right. This task, which almost any other writer would have found impracticable, was easy to him. The peculiar art which he possessed of communicating his meaning circuitously through a long succession of associated ideas, and of intimating more than he expressed, enabled him to disguise those incongruities which he could not avoid.

Poetry which relates to the beings of another world ought to be at once mysterious and picturesque. That of Milton is so. That of Dante is picturesque, indeed, beyond any that ever was written. Its effect approaches to that produced by the pencil or the chisel. But it is picturesque to the exclusion of all mystery. This is a fault on the right side, a fault inseparable from the plan of Dante's poem, which, as we have already observed, rendered the utmost accuracy of description necessary. Still it is a fault. The supernatural agents excite an interest; but it is not the interest which is proper to supernatural agents. We feel that we could talk to the ghosts and demons without any emotion of unearthly awe. We could, like Don Juan, ask them to supper, and eat heartily in their company. Dante's angels are good men with wings. His devils are spiteful, ugly executioners. His dead men are merely living men in strange situations. The scene which passes between the poet and Farinata is justly celebrated. Still, Farinata in the burning tomb is exactly what Farinata would have been at an *auto-da-fé*. Nothing can be more touching than the first interview of Dante and Beatrice. Yet what is it but a lovely woman chiding, with sweet, austere composure, the lover for whose affection she is grateful, but whose

vices she reprobates? The feelings which give the passage its charm would suit the streets of Florence as well as the summit of the Mount of Purgatory.

The spirits of Milton are unlike those of almost all other writers. His fiends, in particular, are wonderful creations. They are not metaphysical abstractions. They are not wicked men. They are not ugly beasts. They have no horns, no tails, none of the fee-faw-fum of Tasso and Klopstock. They have just enough in common with human nature to be intelligible to human beings. Their characters are, like their forms, marked by a certain dim resemblance to those of men, but exaggerated to gigantic dimensions, and veiled in mysterious gloom.

Perhaps the gods and demons of Æschylus may best bear a comparison with the angels and devils of Milton. The style of the Athenian had, as we have remarked, something of the Oriental character; and the same peculiarity may be traced in his mythology. It has nothing of the amenity and elegance which we generally find in the superstitions of Greece. All is rugged, barbaric, and colossal. The legends of Æschylus seem to harmonize less with the fragrant groves and graceful porticos in which his countrymen paid their vows to the God of Light and Goddess of Desire than with those huge and grotesque labyrinths of eternal granite in which Egypt enshrined her mystic Osiris, or in which Hindostan still bows down to her seven-headed idols. His favorite gods are those of the elder generation, the sons of heaven and earth, compared with whom Jupiter himself was a stripling and an upstart, the gigantic Titans, and the inexorable Furies. Foremost among his creations of this class stands Prometheus, half fiend, half redeemer, the friend of man, the sullen and implacable enemy of heaven. Prometheus bears undoubtedly a considerable resemblance

to the Satan of Milton. In both we find the same impatience of control, the same ferocity, the same unconquerable pride. In both characters also are mingled, though in very different proportions, some kind and generous feelings. Prometheus, however, is hardly superhuman enough. He talks too much of his chains and his uneasy posture: he is rather too much depressed and agitated. His resolution seems to depend on the knowledge which he possesses that he holds the fate of his torturer in his hands, and that the hour of his release will surely come. But Satan is a creature of another sphere. The might of his intellectual nature is victorious over the extremity of pain. Amidst agonies which cannot be conceived without horror, he deliberates, resolves, and even exults. Against the sword of Michael, against the thunder of Jehovah, against the flaming lake, and the marl burning with solid fire, against the prospect of an eternity of unintermitted misery, his spirit bears up unbroken, resting on its own innate energies, requiring no support from anything external, nor even from hope itself.

To return for a moment to the parallel which we have been attempting to draw between Milton and Dante, we would add that the poetry of these great men has in a considerable degree taken its character from their moral qualities. They are not egotists. They rarely obtrude their idiosyncrasies on their readers. They have nothing in common with those modern beggars for fame who extort a pittance from the compassion of the inexperienced by exposing the nakedness and sores of their minds. Yet it would be difficult to name two writers whose works have been more completely, though undesignedly, colored by their personal feelings.

The character of Milton was peculiarly distinguished by loftiness of spirit; that of Dante by intensity of feeling.

In every line of the *Divine Comedy* we discern the asperity which is produced by pride struggling with misery. There is perhaps no work in the world so deeply and uniformly sorrowful. The melancholy of Dante was no fantastic caprice. It was not, as far as at this distance of time can be judged, the effect of external circumstances. It was from within. Neither love nor glory, neither the conflicts of earth nor the hope of heaven, could dispel it. It turned every consolation and every pleasure into its own nature. It resembled that noxious Sardinian soil of which the intense bitterness is said to have been perceptible even in its honey. His mind was, in the noble language of the Hebrew poet, "a land of darkness, as darkness itself, and where the light was as darkness." The gloom of his character discolors all the passions of men, and all the face of nature, and tinges with its own livid hue the flowers of Paradise and the glories of the eternal throne. All the portraits of him are singularly characteristic. No person can look on the features, noble even to ruggedness — the dark furrows of the cheek, the haggard and woful stare of the eye, the sullen and contemptuous curve of the lip — and doubt that they belong to a man too proud and too sensitive to be happy.

Milton was, like Dante, a statesman and a lover; and, like Dante, he had been unfortunate in ambition and in love. He had survived his health and his sight, the comforts of his home, and the prosperity of his party. Of the great men by whom he had been distinguished at his entrance into life, some had been taken away from the evil to come; some had carried into foreign climates their unconquerable hatred of oppression; some were pining in dungeons; and some had poured forth their blood on scaffolds. Venal and licentious scribblers, with just sufficient talent to clothe the thoughts of a pander in

the style of a bellman, were now the favorite writers of the Sovereign and of the public. It was a loathsome herd, which could be compared to nothing so fitly as to the rabble of *Comus*, grotesque monsters, half bestial, half human, dropping with wine, bloated with gluttony, and reeling in obscene dances. Amidst these that fair Muse was placed, like the chaste lady of the *Masque*, lofty, spotless, and serene, to be chattered at, and pointed at, and grinned at, by the whole rout of Satyrs and Goblins. If ever despondency and asperity could be excused in any man, they might have been excused in Milton. But the strength of his mind overcame every calamity. Neither blindness, nor gout, nor age, nor penury, nor domestic afflictions, nor political disappointments, nor abuse, nor proscription, nor neglect, had power to disturb his sedate and majestic patience. His spirits do not seem to have been high, but they were singularly equable. His temper was serious, perhaps stern; but it was a temper which no sufferings could render sullen or fretful. Such as it was when, on the eve of great events, he returned from his travels, in the prime of health and manly beauty, loaded with literary distinctions, and glowing with patriotic hopes, such it continued to be when, after having experienced every calamity which is incident to our nature, old, poor, sightless, and disgraced, he retired to his hovel to die.

Hence it was that, though he wrote the *Paradise Lost* at a time of life when images of beauty and tenderness are in general beginning to fade, even from those minds in which they have not been effaced by anxiety and disappointment, he adorned it with all that is most lovely and delightful in the physical and in the moral world. Neither Theocritus nor Ariosto had a finer or a more healthful sense of the pleasantness of external objects, or

loved better to luxuriate amidst sunbeams and flowers, the songs of nightingales, the juice of summer fruits, and the coolness of shady fountains. His conception of love unites all the voluptuousness of the Oriental harem, and all the gallantry of the chivalric tournament, with all the pure and quiet affection of an English fireside. His poetry reminds us of the miracles of Alpine scenery. Nooks and dells, beautiful as fairy-land, are embosomed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations. The roses and myrtles bloom unchilled on the verge of the avalanche.

Traces, indeed, of the peculiar character of Milton may be found in all his works; but it is most strongly displayed in the *Sonnets*. Those remarkable poems have been undervalued by critics who have not understood their nature. They have no epigrammatic point. There is none of the ingenuity of Filicaja in the thought, none of the hard and brilliant enamel of Petrarch in the style. They are simple but majestic records of the feelings of the poet; as little tricked out for the public eye as his diary would have been. A victory, an expected attack upon the city, a momentary fit of depression or exultation, a jest thrown out against one of his books, a dream which for a short time restored to him that beautiful face over which the grave had closed forever, led him to musings, which, without effort, shaped themselves into verse. The unity of sentiment and severity of style which characterize these little pieces remind us of the Greek Anthology, or perhaps still more of the Collects of the English Liturgy. The noble poem on the massacres of Piedmont is strictly a collect in verse.

The *Sonnets* are more or less striking, according as the occasions which gave birth to them are more or less interesting. But [illegible] almost without exception,

dignified by a sobriety and greatness of mind to which we know not where to look for a parallel. It would, indeed, be scarcely safe to draw any decided inferences as to the character of a writer from passages directly egotistical. But the qualities which we have ascribed to Milton, though perhaps most strongly marked in those parts of his works which treat of his personal feelings, are distinguishable in every page, and impart to all his writings, prose and poetry, English, Latin, and Italian, a strong family likeness.

His public conduct was such as was to be expected from a man of spirit so high and of an intellect so powerful. He lived at one of the most memorable eras in the history of mankind, at the very crisis of the great conflict between Oromasdes and Arimanes, liberty and despotism, reason and prejudice. That great battle was fought for no single generation, for no single land. The destinies of the human race were staked on the same cast with the freedom of the English people. Then were first proclaimed those mighty principles which have since worked their way into the depths of the American forests, which have roused Greece from the slavery and degradation of two thousand years, and which, from one end of Europe to the other, have kindled an unquenchable fire in the hearts of the oppressed, and loosed the knees of the oppressors with an unwonted fear.

Of those principles, then struggling for their infant existence, Milton was the most devoted and eloquent literary champion. We need not say how much we admire his public conduct. But we cannot disguise from ourselves that a large portion of his countrymen still think it unjustifiable. The civil war, indeed, has been more discussed, and is less understood, than any event in English history. The friends of liberty labored

under the disadvantage of which the lion in the fable complained so bitterly. Though they were the conquerors, their enemies were the painters. As a body, the Roundheads had done their utmost to decry and ruin literature; and literature was even with them, as, in the long run, it always is with its enemies. The best book on their side of the question is the charming narrative of Mrs. Hutchinson. May's *History of the Parliament* is good; but it breaks off at the most interesting crisis of the struggle. The performance of Ludlow is foolish and violent; and most of the later writers who have espoused the same cause — Oldmixon, for instance, and Catherine Macaulay — have, to say the least, been more distinguished by zeal than either by candor or by skill. On the other side are the most authoritative and the most popular historical works in our language, that of Clarendon, and that of Hume. The former is not only ably written and full of valuable information, but has also an air of dignity and sincerity which makes even the prejudices and errors with which it abounds respectable. Hume, from whose fascinating narrative the great mass of the reading public are still contented to take their opinions, hated religion so much that he hated liberty for having been allied with religion, and has pleaded the cause of tyranny with the dexterity of an advocate while affecting the impartiality of a judge.

The public conduct of Milton must be approved or condemned according as the resistance of the people to Charles the First shall appear to be justifiable or criminal. We shall, therefore, make no apology for dedicating a few pages to the discussion of that interesting and most important question. We shall not argue it on general grounds. We shall not recur to those primary principles from which the claim of any gov-

ernment to the obedience of its subjects is to be deduced. We are entitled to that vantage-ground; but we will relinquish it. We are, on this point, so confident of superiority, that we are not unwilling to imitate the ostentatious generosity of those ancient knights who vowed to joust without helmet or shield against all enemies, and to give their antagonists the advantage of sun and wind. We will take the naked constitutional question. We confidently affirm that every reason which can be urged in favor of the Revolution of 1688 may be urged with at least equal force in favor of what is called the Great Rebellion.

In one respect only, we think, can the warmest admirers of Charles venture to say that he was a better sovereign than his son. He was not, in name and profession, a Papist; we say in name and profession, because both Charles himself and his creature Laud, while they abjured the innocent badges of popery, retained all its worst vices — a complete subjection of reason to authority, a weak preference of form to substance, a childish passion for mummeries, an idolatrous veneration for the priestly character, and, above all, a merciless intolerance. This, however, we waive. We will concede that Charles was a good Protestant; but we say that his Protestantism does not make the slightest distinction between his case and that of James.

The principles of the Revolution have often been grossly misrepresented, and never more than in the course of the present year. There is a certain class of men, who, while they profess to hold in reverence the great names and great actions of former times, never look at them for any other purpose than in order to find in them some excuse for existing abuses. In every venerable precedent they pass by what is essential, and

take only what is accidental: they keep out of sight what is beneficial, and hold up to public imitation all that is defective. If in any part of any great example there be anything unsound, these flesh-flies detect it with an unerring instinct, and dart upon it with a ravenous delight. If some good end has been attained in spite of them, they feel, with their prototype, that

> "Their labor must be to pervert that end,
> And out of good still to find means of evil."

To the blessings which England has derived from the Revolution these people are utterly insensible. The expulsion of a tyrant, the solemn recognition of popular rights, liberty, security, toleration, all go for nothing with them. One sect there was, which, from unfortunate temporary causes, it was thought necessary to keep under close restraint. One part of the empire there was so unhappily circumstanced, that at that time its misery was necessary to our happiness, and its slavery to our freedom. These are the parts of the Revolution which the politicians of whom we speak love to contemplate, and which seem to them not indeed to vindicate, but in some degree to palliate, the good which it has produced. Talk to them of Naples, of Spain, or of South America. They stand forth zealots for the doctrine of Divine Right, which has now come back to us, like a thief from transportation, under the *alias* of Legitimacy. But mention the miseries of Ireland. Then William is a hero. Then Somers and Shrewsbury are great men. Then the Revolution is a glorious era. The very same persons who, in this country, never omit an opportunity of reviving every wretched Jacobite slander respecting the Whigs of that period, have no sooner crossed St. George's Channel than they begin to fill their bumpers to the glorious and immortal memory.

They may truly boast that they look not at men, but at measures. So that evil be done, they care not who does it; the arbitrary Charles, or the liberal William, Ferdinand the Catholic, or Frederic the Protestant. On such occasions their deadliest opponents may reckon upon their candid construction. The bold assertions of these people have of late impressed a large portion of the public with an opinion that James the Second was expelled simply because he was a Catholic, and that the Revolution was essentially a Protestant Revolution.

But this certainly was not the case; nor can any person who has acquired more knowledge of the history of those times than is to be found in Goldsmith's *Abridgment* believe that, if James had held his own religious opinions without wishing to make proselytes, or if, wishing even to make proselytes, he had contented himself with exerting only his constitutional influence for that purpose, the Prince of Orange would ever have been invited over. Our ancestors, we suppose, knew their own meaning; and, if we may believe them, their hostility was primarily not to popery, but to tyranny. They did not drive out a tyrant because he was a Catholic; but they excluded Catholics from the crown because they thought them likely to be tyrants. The ground on which they, in their famous resolution, declared the throne vacant, was this, "that James had broken the fundamental laws of the kingdom." Every man, therefore, who approves of the Revolution of 1688 must hold that the breach of fundamental laws on the part of the sovereign justifies resistance. The question, then, is this: Had Charles the First broken the fundamental laws of England?

No person can answer in the negative, unless he refuses credit, not merely to all the accusations brought against Charles by his opponents, but to the narratives of the

warmest Royalists, and to the confessions of the King himself. If there be any truth in any historian of any party who has related the events of that reign, the conduct of Charles, from his accession to the meeting of the Long Parliament, had been a continued course of oppression and treachery. Let those who applaud the Revolution and condemn the Rebellion mention one act of James the Second to which a parallel is not to be found in the history of his father. Let them lay their fingers on a single article in the Declaration of Right, presented by the two Houses to William and Mary, which Charles is not acknowledged to have violated. He had, according to the testimony of his own friends, usurped the functions of the legislature, raised taxes without the consent of Parliament, and quartered troops on the people in the most illegal and vexatious manner. Not a single session of Parliament had passed without some unconstitutional attack on the freedom of debate; the right of petition was grossly violated; arbitrary judgments, exorbitant fines, and unwarranted imprisonments were grievances of daily occurrence. If these things do not justify resistance, the Revolution was treason; if they do, the Great Rebellion was laudable.

But, it is said, why not adopt milder measures? Why, after the king had consented to so many reforms, and renounced so many oppressive prerogatives, did the Parliament continue to rise in their demands at the risk of provoking a civil war? The ship-money had been given up. The Star-chamber had been abolished. Provision had been made for the frequent convocation and secure deliberation of parliaments. Why not pursue an end confessedly good by peaceable and regular means? We recur again to the analogy of the Revolution. Why was James driven from the throne? Why was he not

retained upon conditions? He too had offered to call a free parliament, and to submit to its decision all the matters in dispute. Yet we are in the habit of praising our forefathers, who preferred a revolution, a disputed succession, a dynasty of strangers, twenty years of foreign and intestine war, a standing army, and a national debt, to the rule, however restricted, of a tried and proved tyrant. The Long Parliament acted on the same principle, and is entitled to the same praise. They could not trust the king. He had no doubt passed salutary laws; but what assurance was there that he would not break them? He had renounced oppressive prerogatives; but where was the security that he would not resume them? The nation had to deal with a man whom no tie could bind, a man who made and broke promises with equal facility, a man whose honor had been a hundred times pawned, and never redeemed.

Here, indeed, the Long Parliament stands on still stronger ground than the Convention of 1688. No action of James can be compared to the conduct of Charles with respect to the Petition of Right. The Lords and Commons present him with a bill in which the constitutional limits of his power are marked out. He hesitates; he evades; at last he bargains to give his assent for five subsidies. The bill receives his solemn assent; the subsidies are voted; but no sooner is the tyrant relieved than he returns at once to all the arbitrary measures which he had bound himself to abandon, and violates all the clauses of the very act which he had been paid to pass.

For more than ten years the people had seen the rights which were theirs by a double claim, by immemorial inheritance and by recent purchase, infringed by the perfidious king who had recognized them. At length circumstances compelled Charles to summon another

Parliament; another chance was given to our fathers: were they to throw it away as they had thrown away the former? Were they again to be cozened by *le Roi le veut*? Were they again to advance their money on pledges which had been forfeited over and over again? Were they to lay a second Petition of Right at the foot of the throne, to grant another lavish aid in exchange for another unmeaning ceremony, and then to take their departure, till, after ten years more of fraud and oppression, their prince should again require a supply, and again repay it with a perjury? They were compelled to choose whether they would trust a tyrant or conquer him. We think that they chose wisely and nobly.

The advocates of Charles, like the advocates of other malefactors against whom overwhelming evidence is produced, generally decline all controversy about the facts, and content themselves with calling testimony to character. He had so many private virtues! And had James the Second no private virtues? Was Oliver Cromwell, his bitterest enemies themselves being judges, destitute of private virtues? And what, after all, are the virtues ascribed to Charles? A religious zeal, not more sincere than that of his son, and fully as weak and narrow-minded, and a few of the ordinary household decencies which half the tombstones in England claim for those who lie beneath them. A good father! A good husband! Ample apologies indeed for fifteen years of persecution, tyranny, and falsehood!

We charge him with having broken his coronation oath; and we are told that he kept his marriage vow! We accuse him of having given up his people to the merciless inflictions of the most hot-headed and hard-hearted of prelates; and the defense is, that he took his little son on his knee and kissed him! We censure him

for having violated the articles of the Petition of Right, after having, for good and valuable consideration, promised to observe them; and we are informed that he was accustomed to hear prayers at six o'clock in the morning! It is to such considerations as these, together with his Vandyke dress, his handsome face, and his peaked beard, that he owes, we verily believe, most of his popularity with the present generation.

For ourselves, we own that we do not understand the common phrase, a good man, but a bad king. We can as easily conceive a good man and an unnatural father, or a good man and a treacherous friend. We cannot, in estimating the character of an individual, leave out of our consideration his conduct in the most important of all human relations; and if in that relation we find him to have been selfish, cruel, and deceitful, we shall take the liberty to call him a bad man, in spite of all his temperance at table, and all his regularity at chapel.

We cannot refrain from adding a few words respecting a topic on which the defenders of Charles are fond of dwelling. If, they say, he governed his people ill, he at least governed them after the example of his predecessors. If he violated their privileges, it was because their privileges had not been accurately defined. No act of oppression has ever been imputed to him which has not a parallel in the annals of the Tudors. This point Hume has labored, with an art which is as discreditable in a historical work as it would be admirable in a forensic address. The answer is short, clear, and decisive. Charles had assented to the Petition of Right. He had renounced the oppressive powers said to have been exercised by his predecessors, and he had renounced them for money. He was not entitled to set up his antiquated claims against his own recent release.

These arguments are so obvious that it may seem superfluous to dwell upon them. But those who have observed how much the events of that time are misrepresented and misunderstood will not blame us for stating the case simply. It is a case of which the simplest statement is the strongest.

The enemies of the Parliament, indeed, rarely choose to take issue on the great points of the question. They content themselves with exposing some of the crimes and follies to which public commotions necessarily give birth. They bewail the unmerited fate of Strafford. They execrate the lawless violence of the army. They laugh at the Scriptural names of the preachers. Major-generals fleecing their districts; soldiers revelling on the spoils of a ruined peasantry; upstarts, enriched by the public plunder, taking possession of the hospitable firesides and hereditary trees of the old gentry; boys smashing the beautiful windows of cathedrals; Quakers riding naked through the market-place; Fifth-monarchy-men shouting for King Jesus; agitators lecturing from the tops of tubs on the fate of Agag; all these, they tell us, were the offspring of the Great Rebellion.

Be it so. We are not careful to answer in this matter. These charges, were they infinitely more important, would not alter our opinion of an event which alone has made us to differ from the slaves who crouch beneath despotic sceptres. Many evils, no doubt, were produced by the civil war. They were the price of our liberty. Has the acquisition been worth the sacrifice? It is the nature of the devil of tyranny to tear and rend the body which he leaves. Are the miseries of continued possession less horrible than the struggles of the tremendous exorcism?

If it were possible that a people brought up under an intolerant and arbitrary system could subvert that system without acts of cruelty and folly, half the objections to despotic power would be removed. We should, in that case, be compelled to acknowledge that it at least produces no pernicious effects on the intellectual and moral character of a nation. We deplore the outrages which accompany revolutions. But the more violent the outrages, the more assured we feel that a revolution was necessary. The violence of these outrages will always be proportioned to the ferocity and ignorance of the people; and the ferocity and ignorance of the people will be proportioned to the oppression and degradation under which they have been accustomed to live. Thus it was in our civil war. The heads of the Church and State reaped only that which they had sown. The Government had prohibited free discussion; it had done its best to keep the people unacquainted with their duties and their rights. The retribution was just and natural. If our rulers suffered from popular ignorance, it was because they had themselves taken away the key of knowledge. If they were assailed with blind fury, it was because they had exacted an equally blind submission.

It is the character of such revolutions that we always see the worst of them at first. Till men have been some time free, they know not how to use their freedom. The natives of wine countries are generally sober. In climates where wine is a rarity intemperance abounds. A newly liberated people may be compared to a Northern army encamped on the Rhine or the Xeres. It is said that when soldiers in such a situation find themselves able to indulge without restraint in such a rare and expensive luxury, nothing is to be seen but

intoxication. Soon, however, plenty teaches discretion, and, after wine has been for a few months their daily fare, they become more temperate than they had ever been in their own country. In the same manner, the final and permanent fruits of liberty are wisdom, moderation, and mercy. Its immediate effects are often atrocious crimes, conflicting errors, scepticism on points the most clear, dogmatism on points the most mysterious. It is just at this crisis that its enemies love to exhibit it. They pull down the scaffolding from the half-finished edifice; they point to the flying dust, the falling bricks, the comfortless rooms, the frightful irregularity of the whole appearance; and then ask in scorn where the promised splendor and comfort is to be found. If such miserable sophisms were to prevail, there would never be a good house or a good government in the world.

Ariosto tells a pretty story of a fairy, who, by some mysterious law of her nature, was condemned to appear at certain seasons in the form of a foul and poisonous snake. Those who injured her during the period of her disguise were forever excluded from participation in the blessings which she bestowed. But to those who, in spite of her loathsome aspect, pitied and protected her, she afterwards revealed herself in the beautiful and celestial form which was natural to her, accompanied their steps, granted all their wishes, filled their houses with wealth, made them happy in love and victorious in war. Such a spirit is Liberty. At times she takes the form of a hateful reptile. She grovels, she hisses, she stings. But woe to those who in disgust shall venture to crush her! And happy are those who, having dared to receive her in her degraded and frightful shape, shall at length be rewarded by her in the time of her beauty and her glory!

There is only one cure for the evils which newly acquired freedom produces; and that cure is freedom. When a prisoner first leaves his cell he cannot bear the light of day; he is unable to discriminate colors or recognize faces. But the remedy is, not to remand him into his dungeon, but to accustom him to the rays of the sun. The blaze of truth and liberty may at first dazzle and bewilder nations which have become half-blind in the house of bondage. But let them gaze on, and they will soon be able to bear it. In a few years men learn to reason. The extreme violence of opinions subsides. Hostile theories correct each other. The scattered elements of truth cease to contend, and begin to coalesce; and at length a system of justice and order is educed out of the chaos.

Many politicians of our time are in the habit of laying it down as a self-evident proposition, that no people ought to be free till they are fit to use their freedom. The maxim is worthy of the fool in the old story, who resolved not to go into the water till he had learned to swim. If men are to wait for liberty till they become wise and good in slavery, they may indeed wait forever.

Therefore it is that we decidedly approve of the conduct of Milton and the other wise and good men who, in spite of much that was ridiculous and hateful in the conduct of their associates, stood firmly by the cause of public liberty. We are not aware that the poet has been charged with personal participation in any of the blamable excesses of that time. The favorite topic of his enemies is the line of conduct which he pursued with regard to the execution of the King. Of that celebrated proceeding we by no means approve. Still, we must say, in justice to the many eminent persons who concurred in it, and in justice, more particularly, to the eminent person who defended it,

that nothing can be more absurd than the imputations which, for the last hundred and sixty years, it has been the fashion to cast upon the Regicides. We have, throughout, abstained from appealing to first principles. We will not appeal to them now. We recur again to the parallel case of the Revolution. What essential distinction can be drawn between the execution of the father and the deposition of the son? What constitutional maxim is there which applies to the former and not to the latter? The King can do no wrong. If so, James was as innocent as Charles could have been. The minister only ought to be responsible for the acts of the sovereign. If so, why not impeach Jeffreys and retain James? The person of a king is sacred. Was the person of James considered sacred at the Boyne? To discharge cannon against an army in which a king is known to be posted is to approach pretty near to regicide. Charles, too, it should always be remembered, was put to death by men who had been exasperated by the hostilities of several years, and who had never been bound to him by any other tie than that which was common to them with all their fellow-citizens. Those who drove James from his throne, who seduced his army, who alienated his friends, who first imprisoned him in his palace, and then turned him out of it, who broke in upon his very slumbers by imperious messages, who pursued him with fire and sword from one part of the empire to another, who hanged, drew, and quartered his adherents, and attainted his innocent heir, were his nephew and his two daughters. When we reflect on all these things, we are at a loss to conceive how the same persons who, on the fifth of November, thank God for wonderfully conducting his servant William, and for making all opposition fall before him until he became our King and Governor,

can, on the thirtieth of January, contrive to be afraid that the blood of the Royal Martyr may be visited on themselves and their children.

We disapprove, we repeat, of the execution of Charles; not because the constitution exempts the king from responsibility, for we know that all such maxims, however excellent, have their exceptions; nor because we feel any peculiar interest in his character, for we think that his sentence describes him with perfect justice as "a tyrant, a traitor, a murderer, and a public enemy;" but because we are convinced that the measure was most injurious to the cause of freedom. He whom it removed was a captive and a hostage: his heir, to whom the allegiance of every Royalist was instantly transferred, was at large. The Presbyterians could never have been perfectly reconciled to the father: they had no such rooted enmity to the son. The great body of the people, also, contemplated that proceeding with feelings which, however unreasonable, no government could safely venture to outrage.

But though we think the conduct of the Regicides blamable, that of Milton appears to us in a very different light. The deed was done. It could not be undone. The evil was incurred; and the object was to render it as small as possible. We censure the chiefs of the army for not yielding to the popular opinion; but we cannot censure Milton for wishing to change that opinion. The very feeling which would have restrained us from committing the act would have led us, after it had been committed, to defend it against the ravings of servility and superstition. For the sake of public liberty, we wish that the thing had not been done, while the people disapproved of it. But, for the sake of public liberty, we should also have wished the people to approve of it when it was done. If anything more were wanting to the justification of

Milton, the book of Salmasius would furnish it. That miserable performance is now with justice considered only as a beacon to word-catchers, who wish to become statesmen. The celebrity of the man who refuted it, the *Æneæ magni dextra*, gives it all its fame with the present generation. In that age the state of things was different. It was not then fully understood how vast an interval separates the mere classical scholar from the political philosopher. Nor can it be doubted that a treatise which, bearing the name of so eminent a critic, attacked the fundamental principles of all free governments, must, if suffered to remain unanswered, have produced a most pernicious effect on the public mind.

We wish to add a few words relative to another subject on which the enemies of Milton delight to dwell — his conduct during the administration of the Protector. That an enthusiastic votary of liberty should accept office under a military usurper seems, no doubt, at first sight, extraordinary. But all the circumstances in which the country was then placed were extraordinary. The ambition of Oliver was of no vulgar kind. He never seems to have coveted despotic power. He at first fought sincerely and manfully for the Parliament, and never deserted it till it had deserted its duty. If he dissolved it by force, it was not till he found that the few members who remained after so many deaths, secessions, and expulsions, were desirous to appropriate to themselves a power which they held only in trust, and to inflict upon England the curse of a Venetian oligarchy. But even when thus placed by violence at the head of affairs, he did not assume unlimited power. He gave the country a constitution far more perfect than any which had at that time been known in the world. He reformed the representative system in a manner which has extorted praise even from Lord

Clarendon. For himself he demanded indeed the first place in the commonwealth; but with powers scarcely so great as those of a Dutch stadtholder, or an American president. He gave the Parliament a voice in the appointment of ministers, and left to it the whole legislative authority, not even reserving to himself a veto on its enactments; and he did not require that the chief magistracy should be hereditary in his family. Thus far, we think, if the circumstances of the time and the opportunities which he had of aggrandizing himself be fairly considered, he will not lose by comparison with Washington or Bolivar. Had his moderation been met by corresponding moderation, there is no reason to think that he would have overstepped the line which he had traced for himself. But when he found that his parliaments questioned the authority under which they met, and that he was in danger of being deprived of the restricted power which was absolutely necessary to his personal safety, then, it must be acknowledged, he adopted a more arbitrary policy.

Yet, though we believe that the intentions of Cromwell were at first honest, though we believe that he was driven from the noble course which he had marked out for himself by the almost irresistible force of circumstances, though we admire, in common with all men of all parties, the ability and energy of his splendid administration, we are not pleading for arbitary and lawless power, even in his hands. We know that a good constitution is infinitely better than the best despot. But we suspect that, at the time of which we speak, the violence of religious and political enmities rendered a stable and happy settlement next to impossible. The choice lay, not between Cromwell and liberty, but between Cromwell and the Stuarts. That Milton chose well, no man can

doubt who fairly compares the events of the protectorate with those of the thirty years which succeeded it, the darkest and most disgraceful in the English annals. Cromwell was evidently laying, though in an irregular manner, the foundations of an admirable system. Never before had religious liberty and the freedom of discussion been enjoyed in a greater degree. Never had the national honor been better upheld abroad, or the seat of justice better filled at home. And it was rarely that any opposition which stopped short of open rebellion provoked the resentment of the liberal and magnanimous usurper. The institutions which he had established, as set down in the Instrument of Government, and the Humble Petition and Advice, were excellent. His practice, it is true, too often departed from the theory of these institutions. But had he lived a few years longer, it is probable that his institutions would have survived him, and that his arbitrary practice would have died with him. His power had not been consecrated by ancient prejudices. It was upheld only by his great personal qualities. Little, therefore, was to be dreaded from a second protector, unless he were also a second Oliver Cromwell. The events which followed his decease are the most complete vindication of those who exerted themselves to uphold his authority. His death dissolved the whole frame of society. The army rose against the Parliament, the different corps of the army against each other. Sect raved against sect. Party plotted against party. The Presbyterians, in their eagerness to be revenged on the Independents, sacrificed their own liberty, and deserted all their old principles. Without casting one glance on the past, or requiring one stipulation for the future, they threw down their freedom at the feet of the most frivolous and heartless of tyrants.

Then came those days, never to be recalled without a blush, the days of servitude without loyalty and sensuality without love, of dwarfish talents and gigantic vices, the paradise of cold hearts and narrow minds, the golden age of the coward, the bigot, and the slave. The King cringed to his rival that he might trample on his people, sank into a viceroy of France, and pocketed, with complacent infamy, her degrading insults and her more degrading gold. The caresses of harlots and the jests of buffoons regulated the policy of the State. The government had just ability enough to deceive, and just religion enough to persecute. The principles of liberty were the scoff of every grinning courtier, and the Anathema Maranatha of every fawning dean. In every high place, worship was paid to Charles and James, Belial and Moloch; and England propitiated those obscene and cruel idols with the blood of her best and bravest children. Crime succeeded to crime, and disgrace to disgrace, till the race accursed of God and man was a second time driven forth, to wander on the face of the earth, and to be a by-word and a shaking of the head to the nations.

Most of the remarks which we have hitherto made on the public character of Milton apply to him only as one of a large body. We shall proceed to notice some of the peculiarities which distinguished him from his contemporaries. And, for that purpose, it is necessary to take a short survey of the parties into which the political world was at that time divided. We must premise that our observations are intended to apply only to those who adhered, from a sincere preference, to one or to the other side. In days of public commotion, every faction, like an Oriental army, is attended by a crowd of camp-followers, a useless and heartless rabble, who prowl

round its line of march in the hope of picking up something under its protection, but desert it in the day of battle, and often join to exterminate it after a defeat. England, at the time of which we are treating, abounded with fickle and selfish politicians, who transferred their support to every government as it rose; who kissed the hand of the king in 1640, and spat in his face in 1649; who shouted with equal glee when Cromwell was inaugurated at Westminster Hall and when he was dug up to be hanged at Tyburn; who dined on calves' heads, or stuck up oak-branches, as circumstances altered, without the slightest shame or repugnance. These we leave out of the account. We take our estimate of parties from those who really deserve to be called partisans.

We would speak first of the Puritans, the most remarkable body of men, perhaps, which the world has ever produced. The odious and ridiculous parts of their character lie on the surface. He that runs may read them; nor have there been wanting attentive and malicious observers to point them out. For many years after the Restoration they were the theme of unmeasured invective and derision. They were exposed to the utmost licentiousness of the press and of the stage, at the time when the press and the stage were most licentious. They were not men of letters; they were, as a body, unpopular; they could not defend themselves; and the public would not take them under its protection. They were therefore abandoned, without reserve, to the tender mercies of the satirists and dramatists. The ostentatious simplicity of their dress, their sour aspect, their nasal twang, their stiff posture, their long graces, their Hebrew names, the Scriptural phrases which they introduced on every occasion, their contempt

of human learning, their detestation of polite amusements, were indeed fair game for the laughers. But it is not from the laughers alone that the philosophy of history is to be learned. And he who approaches this subject should carefully guard against the influence of that potent ridicule which has already misled so many excellent writers.

> "Ecco il fonte del riso, ed ecco il rio
> Che mortali perigli in se contiene:
> Hor qui tener a fren nostro desio,
> Ed esser cauti molto a noi conviene."

Those who roused the people to resistance; who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years; who formed, out of the most unpromising materials, the finest army that Europe had ever seen; who trampled down King, Church, and Aristocracy; who, in the short intervals of domestic sedition and rebellion, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth — were no vulgar fanatics. Most of their absurdities were mere external badges, like the signs of freemasonry or the dresses of friars. We regret that these badges were not more attractive. We regret that a body to whose courage and talents mankind has owed inestimable obligations had not the lofty elegance which distinguished some of the adherents of Charles the First, or the easy good-breeding for which the court of Charles the Second was celebrated. But, if we must make our choice, we shall, like Bassanio in the play, turn from the specious caskets which contain only the Death's head and the Fool's head, and fix on the plain leaden chest which conceals the treasure.

The Puritans were men whose minds had derived a peculiar character from the daily contemplation of

superior beings and eternal interests. Not content with acknowledging, in general terms, an overruling Providence, they habitually ascribed every event to the will of the Great Being for whose power nothing was too vast, for whose inspection nothing was too minute. To know him, to serve him, to enjoy him, was with them the great end of existence. They rejected with contempt the ceremonious homage which other sects substituted for the pure worship of the soul. Instead of catching occasional glimpses of the Deity through an obscuring veil, they aspired to gaze full on his intolerable brightness, and to commune with him face to face. Hence originated their contempt for terrestrial distinctions. The difference between the greatest and the meanest of mankind seemed to vanish when compared with the boundless interval which separated the whole race from him on whom their own eyes were constantly fixed. They recognized no title to superiority but his favor; and, confident of that favor, they despised all the accomplishments and all the dignities of the world. If they were unacquainted with the works of philosophers and poets, they were deeply read in the oracles of God. If their names were not found in the registers of heralds, they were recorded in the Book of Life. If their steps were not accompanied by a splendid train of menials, legions of ministering angels had charge over them. Their palaces were houses not made with hands; their diadems crowns of glory which should never fade away. On the rich and the eloquent, on nobles and priests, they looked down with contempt; for they esteemed themselves rich in a more precious treasure, and eloquent in a more sublime language, nobles by the right of an earlier creation, and priests by the imposition of a mightier

hand. The very meanest of them was a being to whose fate a mysterious and terrible importance belonged; on whose slightest action the spirits of light and darkness looked with anxious interest; who had been destined, before heaven and earth were created, to enjoy a felicity which should continue when heaven and earth should have passed away. Events which short-sighted politicians ascribed to earthly causes had been ordained on his account. For his sake empires had risen, and flourished, and decayed. For his sake the Almighty had proclaimed his will by the pen of the evangelist and the harp of the prophet. He had been wrested by no common deliverer from the grasp of no common foe. He had been ransomed by the sweat of no vulgar agony, by the blood of no earthly sacrifice. It was for him that the sun had been darkened, that the rocks had been rent, that the dead had risen, that all nature had shuddered at the sufferings of her expiring God.

Thus the Puritan was made up of two different men, the one all self-abasement, penitence, gratitude, passion, the other proud, calm, inflexible, sagacious. He prostrated himself in the dust before his Maker; but he set his foot on the neck of his king. In his devotional retirement, he prayed with convulsions, and groans, and tears. He was half maddened by glorious or terrible illusions. He heard the lyres of angels or the tempting whispers of fiends. He caught a gleam of the Beatific Vision, or woke screaming from dreams of everlasting fire. Like Vane, he thought himself intrusted with the sceptre of the millennial year. Like Fleetwood, he cried in the bitterness of his soul that God had hid his face from him. But when he took his seat in the council, or girt on his sword for war, these tempestuous workings of the soul had left no perceptible trace behind them.

People who saw nothing of the godly but their uncouth visages, and heard nothing from them but their groans and their whining hymns, might laugh at them. But those had little reason to laugh who encountered them in the hall of debate or in the field of battle. These fanatics brought to civil and military affairs a coolness of judgment and an immutability of purpose which some writers have thought inconsistent with their religious zeal, but which were in fact the necessary effects of it. The intensity of their feelings on one subject made them tranquil on every other. One overpowering sentiment had subjected to itself pity and hatred, ambition and fear. Death had lost its terrors and pleasure its charms. They had their smiles and their tears, their raptures and their sorrows, but not for the things of this world. Enthusiasm had made them stoics, had cleared their minds from every vulgar passion and prejudice, and raised them above the influence of danger and of corruption. It sometimes might lead them to pursue unwise ends, but never to choose unwise means. They went through the world, like Sir Artegal's iron man Talus with his flail, crushing and trampling down oppressors, mingling with human beings, but having neither part nor lot in human infirmities; insensible to fatigue, to pleasure, and to pain; not to be pierced by any weapon, not to be withstood by any barrier.

Such we believe to have been the character of the Puritans. We perceive the absurdity of their manners. We dislike the sullen gloom of their domestic habits. We acknowledge that the tone of their minds was often injured by straining after things too high for mortal reach; and we know that, in spite of their hatred of popery, they too often fell into the worst vices of that bad system, intolerance and extravagant austerity, that they had their anchorites and their crusades, their Dunstans and their

De Montforts, their Dominics and their Escobars. Yet, when all circumstances are taken into consideration, we do not hesitate to pronounce them a brave, a wise, an honest, and a useful body.

The Puritans espoused the cause of civil liberty mainly because it was the cause of religion. There was another party, by no means numerous, but distinguished by learning and ability, which acted with them on very different principles. We speak of those whom Cromwell was accustomed to call the Heathens, men who were, in the phraseology of that time, doubting Thomases or careless Gallios with regard to religious subjects, but passionate worshippers of freedom. Heated by the study of ancient literature, they set up their country as their idol, and proposed to themselves the heroes of Plutarch as their examples. They seem to have borne some resemblance to the Brissotines of the French Revolution. But it is not very easy to draw the line of distinction between them and their devout associates, whose tone and manner they sometimes found it convenient to affect, and sometimes, it is probable, imperceptibly adopted.

We now come to the Royalists. We shall attempt to speak of them, as we have spoken of their antagonists, with perfect candor. We shall not charge upon a whole party the profligacy and baseness of the horse-boys, gamblers, and bravoes, whom the hope of license and plunder attracted from the dens of Whitefriars to the standard of Charles, and who disgraced their associates by excesses which, under the stricter discipline of the Parliamentary armies, were never tolerated. We will select a more favorable specimen. Thinking as we do that the cause of the king was the cause of bigotry and tyranny, we yet cannot refrain from looking with complacency on the character of the honest old Cavaliers.

We feel a national pride in comparing them with the instruments which the despots of other countries are compelled to employ, with the mutes who throng their antechambers, and the Janizaries who mount guard at their gates. Our Royalist countrymen were not heartless, dangling courtiers, bowing at every step, and simpering at every word. They were not mere machines for destruction, dressed up in uniforms, caned into skill, intoxicated into valor, defending without love, destroying without hatred. There was a freedom in their subserviency, a nobleness in their very degradation. The sentiment of individual independence was strong within them. They were indeed misled, but by no base or selfish motive. Compassion and romantic honor, the prejudices of childhood, and the venerable names of history, threw over them a spell potent as that of Duessa; and, like the Red-cross Knight, they thought that they were doing battle for an injured beauty, while they defended a false and loathsome sorceress. In truth, they scarcely entered at all into the merits of the political question. It was not for a treacherous king or an intolerant church that they fought, but for the old banner which had waved in so many battles over the heads of their fathers, and for the altars at which they had received the hands of their brides. Though nothing could be more erroneous than their political opinions, they possessed, in a far greater degree than their adversaries, those qualities which are the grace of private life. With many of the vices of the Round Table, they had also many of its virtues, courtesy, generosity, veracity, tenderness, and respect for women. They had far more both of profound and of polite learning than the Puritans. Their manners were more engaging, their tempers more amiable, their tastes more elegant, and their households more cheerful.

Milton did not strictly belong to any of the classes which we have described. He was not a Puritan. He was not a freethinker. He was not a Royalist. In his character the noblest qualities of every party were combined in harmonious union. From the Parliament and from the court, from the conventicle and from the Gothic cloister, from the gloomy and sepulchral circles of the Roundheads, and from the Christmas revel of the hospitable Cavalier, his nature selected and drew to itself whatever was great and good, while it rejected all the base and pernicious ingredients by which those finer elements were defiled. Like the Puritans, he lived

"As ever in his great taskmaster's eye."

Like them, he kept his mind continually fixed on the Almighty Judge and an eternal reward. And hence he acquired their contempt of external circumstances, their fortitude, their tranquillity, their inflexible resolution. But not the coolest sceptic or the most profane scoffer was more perfectly free from the contagion of their frantic delusions, their savage manners, their ludicrous jargon, their scorn of science, and their aversion to pleasure. Hating tyranny with a perfect hatred, he had nevertheless all the estimable and ornamental qualities which were almost entirely monopolized by the party of the tyrant. There was none who had a stronger sense of the value of literature, a finer relish for every elegant amusement, or a more chivalrous delicacy of honor and love. Though his opinions were democratic, his tastes and his associations were such as best harmonize with monarchy and aristocracy. He was under the influence of all the feelings by which the gallant Cavaliers were misled. But of those feelings he was the master, and not the slave. Like the hero of Homer, he enjoyed all the pleasures of fascination; but he was not fascinated.

He listened to the song of the Sirens; yet he glided by without being seduced to their fatal shore. He tasted the cup of Circe; but he bore about him a sure antidote against the effects of its bewitching sweetness. The illusions which captivated his imagination never impaired his reasoning powers. The statesman was proof against the splendor, the solemnity, and the romance which enchanted the poet. Any person who will contrast the sentiments expressed in his treatises on Prelacy with the exquisite lines on ecclesiastical architecture and music in the *Penseroso*, which was published about the same time, will understand our meaning. This is an inconsistency which, more than anything else, raises his character in our estimation, because it shows how many private tastes and feelings he sacrificed, in order to do what he considered his duty to mankind. It is the very struggle of the noble Othello. His heart relents; but his hand is firm. He does naught in hate, but all in honor. He kisses the beautiful deceiver before he destroys her.

That from which the public character of Milton derives its great and peculiar splendor still remains to be mentioned. If he exerted himself to overthrow a forsworn king and a persecuting hierarchy, he exerted himself in conjunction with others. But the glory of the battle which he fought for the species of freedom which is the most valuable, and which was then the least understood, the freedom of the human mind, is all his own. Thousands and tens of thousands among his contemporaries raised their voices against ship-money and the Star-chamber. But there were few indeed who discerned the more fearful evils of moral and intellectual slavery, and the benefits which would result from liberty of the press and the unfettered exercise of private judgment.

These were the objects which Milton justly conceived to be the most important. He was desirous that the people should think for themselves as well as tax themselves, and should be emancipated from the dominion of prejudice as well as from that of Charles. He knew that those who, with the best intentions, overlooked these schemes of reform, and contented themselves with pulling down the King and imprisoning the malignants, acted like the heedless brothers in his own poem, who, in their eagerness to disperse the train of the sorcerer, neglected the means of liberating the captive. They thought only of conquering when they should have thought of disenchanting.

> "Oh, ye mistook! Ye should have snatched his wand
> And bound him fast. Without the rod reversed,
> And backward mutters of dissevering power,
> We cannot free the lady that sits here
> Bound in strong fetters fixed and motionless."

To reverse the rod, to spell the charm backward, to break the ties which bound a stupefied people to the seat of enchantment, was the noble aim of Milton. To this all his public conduct was directed. For this he joined the Presbyterians; for this he forsook them. He fought their perilous battle; but he turned away with disdain from their insolent triumph. He saw that they, like those whom they had vanquished, were hostile to the liberty of thought. He therefore joined the Independents, and called upon Cromwell to break the secular chain, and to save free conscience from the paw of the Presbyterian wolf. With a view to the same great object, he attacked the licensing system, in that sublime treatise which every statesman should wear as a sign upon his hand and as frontlets between his eyes. His attacks were, in general, directed less against particular abuses

than against those deeply seated errors on which almost all abuses are founded, the servile worship of eminent men and the irrational dread of innovation.

That he might shake the foundations of these debasing sentiments more effectually, he always selected for himself the boldest literary services. He never came up in the rear, when the outworks had been carried and the breach entered. He pressed into the forlorn hope. At the beginning of the changes, he wrote with incomparable energy and eloquence against the bishops. But when his opinion seemed likely to prevail, he passed on to other subjects, and abandoned prelacy to the crowd of writers who now hastened to insult a falling party. There is no more hazardous enterprise than that of bearing the torch of truth into those dark and infected recesses in which no light has ever shone. But it was the choice and the pleasure of Milton to penetrate the noisome vapors, and to brave the terrible explosion. Those who most disapprove of his opinions must respect the hardihood with which he maintained them. He, in general, left to others the credit of expounding and defending the popular parts of his religious and political creed. He took his own stand upon those which the great body of his countrymen reprobated as criminal, or derided as paradoxical. He stood up for divorce and regicide. He attacked the prevailing systems of education. His radiant and beneficent career resembled that of the god of light and fertility.

> "Nitor in adversum; nec me, qui cætera, vincit
> Impetus, et rapido contrarius evehor orbi."

It is to be regretted that the prose writings of Milton should, in our time, be so little read. As compositions, they deserve the attention of every man who wishes to become acquainted with the full power of the English language. They abound with passages compared with

which the finest declamations of Burke sink into insignificance. They are a perfect field of cloth of gold. The style is stiff with gorgeous embroidery. Not even in the earlier books of the *Paradise Lost* has the great poet ever risen higher than in those parts of his controversial works in which his feelings, excited by conflict, find a vent in bursts of devotional and lyrical rapture. It is, to borrow his own majestic language, "a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies."

We had intended to look more closely at these performances, to analyze the peculiarities of the diction, to dwell at some length on the sublime wisdom of the *Areopagitica* and the nervous rhetoric of the *Iconoclast*, and to point out some of those magnificent passages which occur in the *Treatise of Reformation*, and the *Animadversions on the Remonstrant*. But the length to which our remarks have already extended renders this impossible.

We must conclude. And yet we can scarcely tear ourselves away from the subject. The days immediately following the publication of this relic of Milton appear to be peculiarly set apart, and consecrated to his memory. And we shall scarcely be censured if, on this his festival, we be found lingering near his shrine, how worthless soever may be the offering which we bring to it. While this book lies on our table, we seem to be contemporaries of the writer. We are transported a hundred and fifty years back. We can almost fancy that we are visiting him in his small lodging; that we see him sitting at the old organ beneath the faded green hangings; that we can catch the quick twinkle of his eyes, rolling in vain to find the day; that we are reading in the lines of his noble countenance the proud and mournful history of his glory and his affliction. We image to ourselves the breathless silence in which we should listen to his slightest word,

the passionate veneration with which we should kneel to kiss his hand and weep upon it, the earnestness with which we should endeavor to console him, if indeed such a spirit could need consolation, for the neglect of an age unworthy of his talents and his virtues, the eagerness with which we should contest with his daughters, or with his Quaker friend Elwood, the privilege of reading Homer to him, or of taking down the immortal accents which flowed from his lips.

These are perhaps foolish feelings. Yet we cannot be ashamed of them; nor shall we be sorry if what we have written shall in any degree excite them in other minds. We are not much in the habit of idolizing either the living or the dead. And we think that there is no more certain indication of a weak and ill-regulated intellect than that propensity which, for want of a better name, we will venture to christen Boswellism. But there are a few characters which have stood the closest scrutiny and the severest tests, which have been tried in the furnace and have proved pure, which have been weighed in the balance and have not been found wanting, which have been declared sterling by the general consent of mankind, and which are visibly stamped with the image and superscription of the Most High. These great men we trust that we know how to prize; and of these was Milton. The sight of his books, the sound of his name, are pleasant to us. His thoughts resemble those celestial fruits and flowers which the Virgin Martyr of Massinger sent down from the gardens of Paradise to the earth, and which were distinguished from the productions of other soils, not only by superior bloom and sweetness, but by miraculous efficacy to invigorate and to heal. They are powerful, not only to delight, but to elevate and purify. Nor do we envy the man who can

study either the life or the writings of the great poet and patriot without aspiring to emulate, not indeed the sublime works with which his genius has enriched our literature, but the zeal with which he labored for the public good, the fortitude with which he endured every private calamity, the lofty disdain with which he looked down on temptations and dangers, the deadly hatred which he bore to bigots and tyrants, and the faith which he so sternly kept with his country and with his fame.

NOTES.

NOTES.

Page 1.—l. 6. In 1649, on the establishment of the Commonwealth, the new office of Latin Secretary, or Secretary of Foreign Tongues, was created, and Milton appointed its first occupant. The Popish Trials and Rye-House Plot belong more than thirty years later, after Milton's death and during the reign of Charles II. See Green's *History of the English People*, Bk. VIII. Ch. II.

l. 8. See Milton's sonnets (XXI. and XXII.) to Cyriac Skinner.

l. 17. The dissolution of the Oxford Parliament, in 1683, marked the end of the Popish Trials and the failure of the Whig plan to exclude the Catholic James II. and his children from succession to the throne. It was followed by the Rye-House Plot to assassinate the king.

Page 2.—l. 22. See Milton's sonnet XI. A brief extract from the *de Doctrina Christiana*, in which non-classical words or uses are italicized, will serve for an illustration of Macaulay's meaning: "Non ergo [agit] de ea [fide] quae coram hominibus tantummodo *justificat*, cum haec *hypocritica* esse possit: quae utilis, quae vera, quae viva, quae *salvifica* est, ex ea dicit *apostolus* non sola sed ex operibus etiam nos *justificari*."

l. 28.

> "Horace's wit, and Virgil's state,
> He did not steal, but emulate!
> And when like them he would appear,
> Their garb, but not their clothes, did wear."
>
> Denham (1615–1668) *On Mr. Abraham Cowley* (1618–1667).

Page 3.—l. 5. Arianism denied the doctrine of the Trinity. For a brief summary of Milton's belief as formulated in the *Treatise of Christian Doctrine*, see prefatory memoir of Milton in Masson's 3 vol. edition of his *Poetical Works* (Lond. 1874), pp. lxvii ff.

l. 7. See *Paradise Lost*, VI. 699 ff.; VII. 163 ff.; X. 68 ff.; XI. 20 ff.

"His son of God, though an unspeakably exalted being, is dependent, inferior, not self-existent, and could be merged in the

Father's person or obliterated entirely without the least diminution of Almighty perfection." Richard Garnett, *Life of Milton*, p. 159.

l. 19. The *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano* was written by Milton while he was Latin Secretary. It attempted the vindication of the English people for the execution of Charles I. See p. 46, and note on l. 1.

Page 4.—l. 34. "Higher argument
Remains, sufficient of itself to raise
That name, unless an age too late, or cold
Climate, or years, damp my intended wing
Depressed; and much they may if all be mine,
Not hers who brings it nightly to my ear."
P. L. Bk. IX. ll. 42–47.

"There prevailed in [Milton's] time an opinion, that the world was in its decay, and that we have had the misfortune to be produced in the decrepitude of Nature. . . . Milton appears to suspect that souls partake of the general degeneracy, and is not without some fear that his book is to be written in *an age too late* for heroic poesy." Johnson (1709–1781). Life of Milton, in *Lives of the Poets*.

Page 5.—l. 3. A careful comparison of the first part of Dr. Channing's essay on Milton (*Works*, Vol. I.), first published at Boston in 1826, with this portion of Macaulay's essay, may very profitably be made. "He [Milton] had not learned the superficial doctrine of a later day, that poetry flourishes most in an uncultivated soil, and that imagination shapes its brightest visions from the mists of a superstitious age; and he had no dread of accumulating knowledge, lest it should oppress and smother his genius."

l. 8. The argument which occupies the next few pages should be thoroughly analyzed and discussed. First is stated the proposition to be proved; then each paragraph presents a new thought, falling into its logical place in the demonstration. Macaulay's paragraphing deserves careful study. Summarize into a single sentence the gist of each paragraph.

Page 6.—l. 1. *Montague*, Charles, Earl of Halifax (1661–1715). See Macaulay's notice of him in his essay on Addison.

l. 2. *Walpole* (1676–1745), father, or son? Macaulay's essay on Horace Walpole discusses both.

l. 12. *Machine*, more properly 'instrument.'

l. 25. The fall of an apple is said to have led Newton to his greatest discovery. Did Newton in that case "look less at in-

dividuals"? Has the advance of modern science been accomplished by the substitution of "vague phrases" for "images"? When we look on the starry sky, do we see less, or more, than the ancients did? Was it because of the rudeness, or the perfection, of the Greek language, that its literature is so great? Are the continually recurring 'Homeric epithets' of the Iliad signs of imagination, or of conventionality?

l. 32. *Shaftesbury* (1671–1713), the third Earl of, the friend of Pope; not to be confounded with his grandfather, so terribly satirized by Dryden in *Absalom and Achitophel.*

l. 33. *Helvetius*, Claude Adrian (1715–1771); a Frenchman whose most important work, *de l'Esprit*, was condemned as immoral, and ordered burnt by the hangman. It contended that enlightened selfishness is a sufficient basis for morality — that 'Honesty is the best *policy*.'

Page 7.—l. 4. *Niobe;* for what offense were her children slain by Apollo and Diana? Such allusions to classical mythology should always be carefully looked up in a Classical Dictionary. The story is told in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, VI. 146 ff.

Aurora. Homer calls her 'rosy-fingered,' 'saffron-robed,' and says that she 'opens the portals of the day.' Why "the *blushes* of his Aurora"?

l. 9. Bernard de Mandeville (1670–1733) tried to show in *The Fable of the Bees* that vice benefits society. The Moral is:

> "Then leave complaints: fools only strive
> To make a great an honest hive.
>
> * * * * * * * *
>
> So vice is beneficial found,
> When it's by justice lopped and bound."

The contemporaries Mandeville and Shaftesbury (see above, l. 7) represent the two extremes of popular philosophy in their day. For an interesting account of the views of both, see the essays on the two in Leslie Stephen's *Essays on Freethinking and Plainspeaking.*

l. 20. Discuss thoroughly Macaulay's definition of poetry. Wordsworth calls poetry "the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge," and "the image of man and nature"; Arnold, "a criticism of life." Coleridge says: "High poetry is the translation of reality into the ideal. . . . The poet is an historian, upon condition of moral power being the only thing in the Universe."

(*Lecture on Milton.*) Channing says in his essay on Milton: "In many poems there is more of truth than in many histories and philosophic theories. The fictions of genius are often the sublimest verities. . . . It is not true that the poet paints a life which does not exist." References for further reading are: Cook's *Sidney's Defense of Poesy;* Matthew Arnold, *The Study of Poetry* (Essays in Criticism, 2nd Series); Stedman, *The Nature and Elements of Poetry;* Wordsworth, *Of the Principles of Poetry and the 'Lyrical Ballads';* Cook, *The Art of Poetry.*

ll. 28–31. *Midsummer Night's Dream*, V. i.

Page 8.—l. 1. "[Poetry's] object is truth, not individual and local, but general, and operative." Wordsworth, *Principles of Poetry.*

l. 32. In Plato's dialogue of *Ion* P. 533, D: 534 (Jowett trans., pp. 501, 502): "The gift which you possess of speaking excellently about Homer is not an art, but, as I was just saying, an inspiration; there is a divinity moving you." But the 'inspiration' is only that which is claimed for the poet. "And as the Corybantian revelers, when they dance, are not in their right mind, so the lyric poets . . .; but when falling under the power of music and metre, they are inspired and possessed." Macaulay's statement lacks accuracy.

Page 9.—l. 24. "In an intellectual nature, framed for progress and for higher modes of being, there must be creative energies, powers of original and ever-growing thought; and poetry is the form in which these energies are chiefly manifested." Channing.

Page 10.—l. 4. *Rabbinical literature*, the writings of the Hebrew masters of the law and teachers, or 'rabbis.'

l. 10. *Petrarch* (1304–1374), an Italian poet, whose lyrics in praise of his love Laura constitute his greatest claim to immortality.

l. 13. *Cowley*, see p. 14, l. 28.

l. 18. *Augustan*, see dictionary.

l. 28. *Epistle to Manso*, written while Milton was in Italy, 1638.

Page 11.—ll. 4–7. *P. L.* IV. 551–554.

Page 12.—l. 29. See Arabian Nights, *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves.*

l. 32. Dryden's opera, *The State of Innocence and the Fall of Man*, was a dramatization of *P. L.*

Page 13.—l. 8. There is here a personal touch of a feeling peculiarly strong in Macaulay. "Nothing caused him so much pleasure . . . as a visit to any scene that he had known in his earlier years." Trevelyan's *Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay.*

l. 31. *Comus*, *L'Allegro*, and *Il Penseroso* were among the earliest of Milton's poems; *Samson Agonistes* was his very latest.

Page 14.—l. 15. *Harold*, the hero of Byron's *Childe Harold.*

l. 28. Aeschylus (525–456 B.C.), Sophocles (495–405 B.C.), and Euripides (480–406 B.C.), were the three great writers of Greek tragedy.

Page 15.—l. 10. *Clytemnestra to Agamemnon*, in Aeschylus's tragedy of *Agamemnon; description of the seven Argive chiefs*, from his *Seven against Thebes.*

l. 29. "*sad Electra's poet*" (see Milton, *Sonnet VIII.*), Euripides. That this passage does not represent Macaulay's mature judgment may be seen from the marginal notes penciled in his copy of the Greek tragedians. "I can hardly account for the contempt which, at school and college, I felt for Euripides. I own that I like him now better than Sophocles." And in a letter to Ellis from India in 1835: "I could not bear Euripides at college. I now read my recantation. He has faults, undoubtedly. But what a poet!"

l. 30. See *Midsummer Night's Dream*, IV. 1.

Page 16.—l. 18. *Masque*, see Century Dictionary. At the time when Comus was written the Masque as a form of private theatrical for festive and ceremonial celebrations was at the height of its popularity in England. The greatest poets and composers of the day were called upon for words and music, prodigious sums were lavished on rich costumes and elaborate stage machinery, and the highest personages, including even the king himself, took part in the presentations. For a detailed account of the most celebrated, sumptuous, and expensive of them all, given at Court by the lawyers of the Four Inns, at the enormous total cost of £21,000 for a single acting, see Masson's *Life of Milton*, Vol. I. pp. 579–587.

l. 21. *Faithful Shepherdess*, by John Fletcher, a contemporary of Shakespeare. The *Aminta* and *Pastor Fido* are Italian pastoral dramas, by Tasso (1544–1595) and Guarini (1537–1612) respectively.

Page 17.—l. 1. It is an old custom for the London chimney-sweeps to celebrate May-day with a special parade, in fantastic dresses.

l. 19. *Letter to Milton*, prefixed to *Comus* in Masson's 3 vol. ed. of Milton's *Poetical Works*, p. 167.

l. 21. Theocritus, first and greatest of pastoral poets, wrote in the Doric dialect of Greek. Hence the word Doric connotes both the subject matter of nature poetry and the style of the Greek pastoral.

"Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and hills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray;
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay."

Lycidas, ll. 186–189.

l. 28. *His own good Genius*, the Attendant Spirit in *Comus*.

l. 32. *Comus*, ll. 1012–1013.

l. 34 ff. Find in *Comus* 976 ff. the original of each phrase in these four lines of Macaulay.

Page 18.—l. 22. A full appreciation of Macaulay's prolonged comparison of Dante and Milton can be gained only by an acquaintance with the works referred to. Such an acquaintance is well worth making. Dante was the greatest poet of mediæval, as Milton of modern, Christianity. The standard translations of Dante are, in poetry Cary's, Dean Plumptre's, and Longfellow's, and in prose Charles Eliot Norton's. Both Longfellow's and Plumptre's are line-for-line translations. For the benefit of those who will verify in either of these the successive references, the following notes quote, so far as possible, the line as well as the canto of each allusion.

l. 30. In the Egyptian hieroglyphics each picture was used as an arbitrary symbol something like the character of an alphabet, not, as in other picture-writing, to denote the thing represented; *e.g.*, a calf stood for the syllable Au; a heron, for Ba.

Page 19.—l. 14. *Inferno* XII. 4–10.

l. 17. *Ibid.* XVI. 94–104.

l. 18. *Ibid.* IX. 112–116.

l. 25. *P. L.* I. 194–209.

l. 28. *Ibid.* IV. 987–988.

l. 30. *Teneriffe*, a volcano in the Canaries; *Atlas*, a mass of mountains in Northern Africa. What classical myth was connected with the latter?

l. 33. *Inf.* XXI. 58–64.

Page 20.—l. 9. *P. L.* XI. 477–493.

l. 16. *Inf.* XXIX. 46–51.

l. 29. *Ibid.* I. 117.

l. 31. *Ibid.* III. 9.

l. 32. *Ibid.* IX. 52–60.

l. 33. *Ibid.* XXI.

Page 21.—l. 1. *Ibid.* XXXIV. 70–80.

l. 2. *Purgatorio*, the second of the three divisions of the *Divina Commedia*, describes the gradual ascent of the Mount of Purgatory.

Page 32.—l. 1. *The lion in the fable. Aesop* (Teubner ed.) 63; *La Fontaine* III. 10. A lion, seeing a picture of a lion conquered by a man, said, "If we lions knew how to paint, you should see us, and more justly, conquerors."

l. 4. *Roundheads*, the Puritans; so called by the Royalists from the close-cropped hair of servants and apprentices.

ll. 6 ff. The authorities here mentioned by Milton are long since out of date, with the exception of Clarendon's History. This still remains unrivaled as a storehouse of facts; but for the general reader Green's *History of the English People* (Vol. III. Chaps. V.–XII.) stands easily first. Disraeli's *Commentaries on Charles I.* now takes the lead as a defense of the royal cause; but never since Carlyle's *Cromwell's Letters* have the Puritans stood in need of champions, or lacked their full share of popular sympathy.

l. 27. Knowledge of the main facts of English history during the reigns of Charles I. and James II. is necessary to an understanding of this part of the essay. References to Green on specific points will be to the *History of the English People.*

Page 33.—l. 17. See Green, Vol. III. pp. 138–139; Masson's *Life of Milton*, Vol. I. pp. 673–685.

l. 29. *There is a certain class of men*, the Tories of Macaulay's own day. Macaulay was himself an ardent Whig.

Page 34.—l. 8. *P. L.*, I. 164, 165.

l. 14. *One sect*, the Roman Catholics.

l. 16. *One part of the empire*, Ireland.

l. 19. In 1825, the date of Macaulay's essay, measures were being urged to enable the Irish Catholics to vote and hold office. These the extreme Tories bitterly opposed. Macaulay's argument is, that they approve just that portion of William's policy which was most unfortunate and unjust, while advocating a theory of government which denies him any right to the throne. They hold to the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings, as their foreign policy to-day shows, though it is under a new name; they deny the principles which only could justify the revolution; but they accept the revolution, not for the blessings which it brought, but for the evil that it did, and try to persuade us that it was this same religious question which was then at issue, — which certainly is not true.

l. 28. *Somers, Shrewsbury*, two of William's ministers.

Page 35.—l. 3. *Ferdinand the Catholic.* Ferdinand of Aragon (1452–1516), who married Isabella of Castile. It was under the joint reign of these two sovereigns that Spain was united into a

single kingdom, the Moors driven out, the New World discovered, and the Inquisition introduced.

l. 4. *Frederick the Protestant* (1596–1632), Frederick V., Prince Palatine, for a short time King of Bohemia and the head of the Protestant Princes of Germany.

l. 13. Oliver Goldsmith's (1728–1774) *History of England*, as well as the abridgment of the same work, here referred to, a part of the hack work to which he was forced by poverty.

l. 24. Macaulay does not state the whole case. The resolution was that the King, "having endeavored to subvert the constitution of this kingdom by breaking the original contract between King and People, and by the advice of Jesuits and other wicked people having violated the fundamental laws, and having withdrawn himself out of the kingdom, *has abdicated* the Government, and that the throne is thereby vacant." It was planned to avoid the necessity of just the conclusion that Macaulay draws, in order to win all parties to its support; it was purposely illogical, in order to be politic. The Tory, though denying the right of the nation to depose its king, could support the resolution on the theory that the King's flight constituted a voluntary abdication. Green, IV. pp. 33–34.

Page 36.—l. 10. Green, IV. p. 35.

l. 28. *Ship money*, Green, Vol. III. pp. 173–178, 182–183. *Star Chamber*, *Ibid.* III. 147. Charles in his efforts to avoid calling a parliament exhausted every possible expedient to raise revenue. The maritime towns had formerly in time of war furnished ships; this was made a precedent for a general tax of the kingdom in time of peace. The Star Chamber was a court of officers of the crown which usurped the jurisdiction of other courts in order to levy oppressive fines, which went into the royal treasury.

Page 37.—l. 8. *The Long Parliament*, Green, III. Chap. VIII. It was called together in 1640, and was not finally dissolved until 1660.

l. 19. The Convention which passed the resolution declaring the throne vacant. The absence of the King made impossible the legal summoning of Parliament.

l. 21. Green, III. 134–137.

Page 38.—l. 3. *Le Roi le veut* (the King wishes it), a phrase surviving from Norman times, by which the king's assent to bills in Parliament is signified.

Page 39.—l. 6. *Vandyke*, the great portrait painter of the time.

Page 40.—l. 11. *Strafford*, Sir Thomas Wentworth, Earl of See Green, III. 150–157, 196, 200–201, 203.

l. 20. The Fifth-monarchy men believed that the millennium had come, and that it was their duty to overthrow all existing governments to make way for the new one, the monarchy of Jesus, — fifth, because it had been preceded by the four great monarchies, the Assyrian, Persian, Greek, and Roman, foretold, according to the common interpretation, in the Book of Daniel.

l. 21. *Agag*, see I. Sam. XV. 33.

Page 41.—l. 31. Xeres, or Jeres, an important town of Spain, in the province of Cadiz, noted for its wine-trade. The word *sherry* is derived from the name of the town.

Page 42.—l. 17. In *Orlando Furioso*, XLIII. 78 ff.

Page 44.—l. 13. Jeffreys was made lord high chancellor by James after the "Bloody Circuit." Green, IV. p. 9.

l. 15. James II. after his flight from England crossed from France to Ireland, supported by French troops, and was there defeated by William in person at the Battle of the Boyne. (Green, IV. p. 51.)

l. 29. William III. was the son of James's oldest sister, and he married Mary, one of James's daughters. The other daughter, Anne, joined William soon after his landing.

l. 32. William landed Nov. 5, 1688.

Page 45.—l. 1. Charles I. was beheaded Jan. 30, 1649.

Page 46.—l. 1. Salmasius was reputed the greatest scholar of his time. He was employed to defend the memory of Charles, and his *Defensio Regia pro Carolo I.* drew such a crushing and terrible reply from Milton in his *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano* that all Europe was amazed, and Salmasius is said to have died of chagrin — an assertion that lacks support.

l. 5. *Aeneid*, X. 830.

l. 32. Notice the frequent examples in the next few pages of Macaulay's fondness for superlatives and sweeping general assertions, which are often pure rhetorical exaggerations, — *e.g.* "the most frivolous and heartless of tyrants" (p. 48, l. 34), "the finest army that Europe had ever seen" (p. 51, l. 15).

l. 34. Not very enthusiastic praise. "It was not thought an ill temperament, and was then generally looked upon as an alteration fit to be more warrantably made, and in a better time." Clarendon, *History of the Rebellion*, Bk. XIV.

Page 47.—l. 12. Bolivar (1783–1830), "the Washington of South America," was the leader of that country in her struggle with Spain for independence.

Page 48.—l. 13. The "Instrument of Government" was a kind of provisional constitution drawn up by the Council of State which had been appointed by the short-lived Convention which, in 1653, succeeded the Long Parliament. (Green, III. p. 283.) The "Humble Petition" was addressed by the army to Parliament in 1647, after the close of the war, desiring the settlement of peace and the restoration of constitutional forms of government, and proposing wide reforms. Green, III. 252–253.

Page 49.—l. 14. Cf. I. Corinthians, XVI. 22.

l. 16. Belial is literally 'wicked one,' or 'worthless one,' and is not an idol. The scriptural 'sons of Belial' is no more than 'children of darkness.'

Page 50.—l. 10. *Dined on calves' heads.* The calf's head was used by the anti-royalists as emblematic of Charles I. There was a Calves' Head Club, which dined annually on the thirtieth of January (the anniversary of the execution of the king), eating calves' heads and toasting the regicides.

l. 11. *Stuck up oak branches.* Charles II. in escaping from England had at one time been concealed for some hours in an oak tree. After the Restoration the oak branch became a symbol of the "Merry Monarch," as he was called, and used to be set up on the twenty-ninth of May, his birth-day and the anniversary of his entrance into London on his return, with festivities similar to those of May-day.

l. 19. *He that runs may read them.* See Habakkuk, II. 2.

Page 51.—ll. 8–11. From Tasso's *Ger. Lib.* (*Jerusalem Delivered*), XV. 57. Hoole's translation is as follows:

> "Behold the fatal spring where laughter dwells,
> Dire poison lurking in its secret cells;
> Here let us guard our thoughts, our passions rein,
> And every loose desire in bonds detain."

l. 29. *In the play, Merchant of Venice,* III. 2.

Page 53.—l. 29. Sir Henry Vane the younger was one of the Fifth-monarchy men. (See note on p. 40, l. 20.)

l. 30. *Fleetwood,* Cromwell's son-in-law and one of the Parliamentary generals.

Page 54.—l. 21. Spenser's *Faërie Queene*, V. I. 14. Sir Artegal typifies Justice.

l. 34. *Dunstan*, St. (925–988), an Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastic, enforced a strict monastic discipline and the celibacy of the clergy. *De Montfort* (1150–1218), father of the English noble of that name, one of the leaders in the persecution of the Albigenses in France. *Dominic*, St. (1170–1221), founder of the Dominicans; a zealous and austere churchman. *Escobar* (1589–1669), a Spanish Jesuit, whose system of casuistry was severely criticised. He thus becomes the type of those who reason to prove that wrong is right.

Page 55.—l. 11. *Doubting Thomases*, John XX. 24–29. *Careless Gallios*, Acts XVIII. 17.

l. 17. *Brissotines*, the moderate republicans of the early days of the Revolution, so called from their leader Brissot; better known by their later name of Girondists.

l. 27. *Whitefriars*, a precinct of London, so called from an old church of the Carmelites, or 'White Friars.' Debtors were there exempt from arrest, and in consequence it became the shelter of criminals and desperate characters of every description, within which no officer of the law dared to venture. See Macaulay's *History*, Chap. III.

Page 56.—l. 16. Spenser's *Faërie Queene*, I. 11.

Page 57.—l. 6. *Conventicle*, *Gothic cloister*, used by metonymy for Dissenters and Episcopalians. An illustration of Macaulay's concreteness.

l. 13. Slightly changed from the last line of Milton's *Sonnet II.*

l. 33. *The Hero of Homer*, Odysseus. See Gayley's *Classic Myths*, pp. 318–321.

Page 58.—l. 10. *Il Penseroso*, ll. 155–166.

l. 18. "For naught I did in hate, but all in honor."
Othello, V. 2.

The simile would be more effective if we were not compelled to remember first of all that Othello was the dupe of Iago, and that Desdemona was wrongfully slain.

l. 33. Milton's *Areopagitica* was a noble and eloquent plea for liberty of the press. It was addressed to the Long Parliament in 1644, in opposition to an ordinance prohibiting the printing of any work without an official license.

Page 59.—ll. 14–18. *Comus*, 815–819.

l. 30. *Presbyterian Wolf,*—

> "Help us to save free Conscience from the paw
> Of hireling wolves, whose Gospel is their maw."
> *Sonnet XVI. (To Cromwell).*

l. 32. *As a sign upon his hand and as frontlets between his eyes.* See Ex. XIII. 9; Deut. VI. 8.

Page 60.—ll. 28–29. Ovid's *Met.* II. 72. Phoebus to Phaëthon.

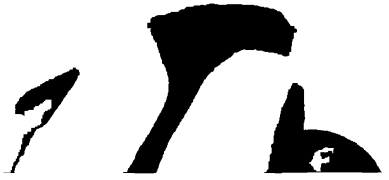
Page 61.—l. 2. *Field of cloth of gold;* from what historical event does this phrase come?

l. 8. From *The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelacy*, Bk. II.; one of his five anti-episcopal pamphlets. To the same group belong the *Treatise of Reformation* and the *Animadversions on the Remonstrant*, mentioned below.

l. 13. After the execution of Charles a book entitled *Eikon Basilike* (*i.e.* Royal Image) appeared, pretending to be the king's meditations and prayers. Milton's *Eikonoklastes* (Image-Breaker) constituted the reply of the Commonwealth.

Page 62.—l. 17. *Boswellism.* James Boswell, Johnson's biographer, fairly worshiped his master.

l. 28. *The Virgin Martyr.* One of Massinger's (1584–1639) plays.



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